MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

NOV. 08 #306

4$ in US & CANADA

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
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See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

SOCIALCIDE-UnapproachableLP	HAVE HEART-Songs to Scream At the Sun-LP
GEHENNA-Land of Sodom-EP	ÄÄRITILA-Ennen Huomista, Tänä-LP
OBLITERATION-Megatons-EP	WARCRY-The Not So Distant Future-LP
VILE NATION-No Exit-EP	MAYYORS-Megan's LOLZ-EP
MUTATORS-Secret Life-LP	SYPHILITIC VAGINAS-CD

TIM BROOKS

THE YOUNG-Get Out Of MY Face-EP	EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
QUESTION-Insanity-EP	HJERTESTOP-LP / SURRENDER-LP
IRON AGE-45/ DEFEKTORSl-45	HUMAN EYE-Fragments of the Universe Nurse-LP
WAX MUSEUMS-EP / COLA FREAKS-45	KIDNAPPERS-LP
SOLDES-Les Soldes-EP	DOPECHARGE-live

MITCH CARDWELL

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP	DAY CREEPER/NIGHT OF PLEAURE-EP
MAYYORS-Megan's LOLZ-EP	WAX MUSEUMS-Magnet Part II-EP
HUMAN EYE-Fragments of the Universe Nurse-LP	LOVER!-I'm Not a Gnome-EP
LIVE FAST DIE/CAMERO WEREWOLF-LP	ROCKNROLL ADVENTURE KIDS-EP
DEFEKTORS-Secret Trials/Doomsday Girl-45	OOGA BOOGAS-live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

ANTI-SYSTEM-The Pax Compilation Tracks-EP	GIUDA-Decadenza-LP
BANANAS-New Animals-LP	HJERTESTOP-Vi Ses I Helvede-LP
BLACK RAINBOW-Pin Pricks-EP	MASSGRAVE/STORMCROW-split LP
BLOTTO/THE RINGERS-split EP	OVER VERT-Gagging and Swallowing-CD
COLA FREAKS-Dødt Batter I/Nej!-45	VIVIAN GIRLS-CD

LAYLA GIBBON

MUTATORS-Secret Life-LP	QUESTION-Insanity-EP
HOMOSTUPIDS-Cat Music-EP	CHRONIC SEIZURE-Ancient Wound-LP
COLD SWEAT-Severed Ties-LP	HUMAN EYE-Fragments of the Universe Nurse-LP
H100s-Dismantle-12"	VIVIAN GIRLS-CD
DRY RIB-CD	WILD BILLY CHILDISH and THE MBEs-LP

BOB GOLDIE

SOCIALCIDE-Unapproachable-LP	INSOMNIO-Happy Loneliness-LP
MIDDLE AMERICA-It Repeats-EP	H100s-Dismantle-12"
BLACK RAINBOW-Pin Pricks-EP	BANANAS-New Animals-LP
PROHIBITION-Sorry for the Inconvenience-EP	COLD SWEAT-Severed Ties-LP
VILE NATION-EP	HJERTESTOP-Vi Ses I Helvede-LP

KENNY KAOS

ON VACATION AND SICK

CAROLYN KEDDY

DAVILA 666-CD	WAX MUSEUMS-Magnet Part II-EP
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP	DEAD GHOSTS-Holy Ghost-EP
WILD BILLY CHILDISH and THE MBEs-LP	PNEUMONIAS-Cheap Fast RNR-CD
MUTATORS-Secret Life-LP	HOMOSTUPIDS-EP/ SOLDES-EP
COLA FREAKS-Dødt Batter I/Nej!-45	OOGA BOOGAS-live

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only , or demo releases to the address on the previous page.

RAY LUJAN

- DISCO VALANTE-We Are Forever-CD
- BANNER PILOT-Resignation Day-CD
- MCRACKINS-Eggzit-CD
- REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY-Destroy-CD
- THE YOUNG-Out Of My Face-EP
- JOHNNY CHILDSTAR-War Movie-EP
- FLAMINGO 50-What If-CD / STATE LOTTERY-CD
- VIVIAN GIRLS-CD / SIDEKICKS-Sam-EP
- YOUR PEST BAND-EP
- DOA-Northern Avenger-CD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- LONDON PX-Orders-EP
- PERFORMING FERRETS-No One Told Us-EP
- THE YOUNG-EP/ GUN OUTFIT-EP
- COLA FREAKS-Dødt Batter I/Nej!-45
- SOLDES-Les Soldes-EP
- BLACK RAINBOW-EP / HOMOSTUPIDS-EP
- SURRENDER-LP / FAMINES-2 x EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH and THE MBEs-LP
- HJERTESTOP-Vi Ses I Helvede-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP

NICK MANGEL

- ARMAGEDOM-Sem-CD
- AUDIO KOLLAPS-Panzer-CD
- AVSKUM-Upprpor-LP
- SYPHILITIC VAGINAS-Complete-CD
- QUESTION-Insanity-LP
- OBLITERATION-Megatons-EP
- NINOS EN KOMBATE-EP
- MASSGRAVE/STORMCROW-split-LP
- KAH ROE SHI-Shi-CD
- HOLOCAUST IN YOUR HEAD/MOTORBREATH-split-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- AVSKUM-Uppror Underifrån-LP
- FOR THE WORSE/OUT COLD-split-EP
- WRETCHED ONES-Rut/Lady Boss-45
- AUKTION/BLACK PANDA-split EP
- OBLITERATION-EP/ WORMEATERS-EP
- WARCRY-LP / CHRONIC SEIZURE-LP
- VILE NATION-No Exit-EP
- MAJOR ACCIDENT-Clockwork Demos-LP
- ANTISEEN/HAMMERLOCK/POLECAT BOOGIE/DEAD
- SECTION/YOUNG OFFENDERS/DOPECHARGE-live

FRED SCHRUNK

- BANANAS-New Animals-LP
- BLACK RAINBOW-Pin Pricks-EP
- SURRENDER-Paper Thrones-LP
- YOUR PEST BAND-Your Pest Vinyl-EP
- COLA FREAKS-Dødt Batter I/Nej!-45
- DAN PADILLA/DUDE JAMS/GORDON GANOS ARMY/SHANGALANG-split-EP
- LEFTY LOOSIE/PEAR OF THE WEST-split-EP
- BLOTTO/RINGERS-split-EP
- HJERTESTOP-Vi Ses I Helvede-LP
- HOMOSTUPIDS-Cat Music-EP

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- ÄÄRITILA-Ennen Huomista, Tänä-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- OBLITERATION-Megatons-EP
- VILE NATION-No Exit-EP
- COLD SWEAT-Severed Ties-LP
- H100s-Dismantle-12"
- THE YOUNG-Get Out Of My Face-EP
- CHRONIC SEIZURE-Ancient Wound-LP
- SURRENDER-Paper Thrones-LP/HUMAN EYE-LP
- SOCIALCIDE-LP / AVSKUM-Uppror Underifrån-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- AVSKUM-Uppror Underifrån-LP
- HJERTESTOP-Vi Ses I Helvede-LP
- OBLITERATION-Megatons-EP
- QUESTION-Insanity-EP
- SOCIALCIDE-Unapproachable-LP
- SURRENDER-Paper Thrones-LP
- WARCRY-The Not So Distant Future-LP
- VILE NATION-No Exit-EP
- ÄÄRITILA-Ennen Huomista, Tänä-LP
- CHRONIC SEIZURE-Ancient Wound-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *A Rough Guide To Bicycle Maintenance*
- *Artcore* #25
- *Doris* #26
- *Equalizing Distort* Volume 8, Issue 5
- *Give Me Back* #4
- *Got Myself* #1
- *Negative Reaction* #11
- *No Thanks, Fuck Everything* #2
- *So It Goes* #2
- *Used VHS*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnwapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage .punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305 October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

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LETTERS

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Dear MRR—
Hi, everybody, how are you? This is Maple Leaf, the singer of the American group, Brain Handle, hailing from Pittsburgh, PA. Summer is starting to wind down, and eventually the golden hearth of autumn will be upon us. Autumn is a time for the scabs of the seasons before to flake off, bringing the cold and protective veil of winter. Yes, it is a time to reflect on the problems and stresses of the year, allowing one to shed problems with the change of season.

Well, brothers and sisters, like the mighty change of season expressing hardship, I must also vent an error that one member of Brain Handle committed about a week ago. Brain Handle had practice scheduled for about 9:30 PM on Wednesday night. I, Maple Leaf, and bass player, 2 x 4, and weird guitar player, Gator Yolk, all showed up a little bit early. The three of us all live together in one basement, and we usually walk together to practice after we eat our dinners. So, we are always on time. Normal guitar player, Long-Time-No-See, showed up at about 9:23 PM. Everyone was ready to go—we planned on starting out with a new song that we have been jamming out live, called "The Sound of a Frightened Man." I would like everyone to know that this is an anti-war song promoting a peace movement, and if you have a problem with that, you can write to me directly about this. Upon your disagreement, I will beat your fucking ass inside out, and then spray-paint a big "Fuck You" on the inside of your ass. I have been lifting a lot of weights and my diet now consists of only Egg whites (cage-free, mind you).

Anyways, 9:45 PM rolled around, and our dumb-ass drummer, Eggs, still hadn't arrived. (He is actually really smart. Sorry for calling you a dumb ass, Eggs.) It was now apparent to the rest of Brain Handle, that this cretin was late for practice. I am officially calling out our drummer, Eggs, for being late for practice last week. I know it was all cool when you showed up. We made jokes about some bands we know. We listened to some Frank Zappa records and ate some pretzels (excluding myself). Then, after smoking some cigarettes and splitting a beer (excluding Gator Yolk) we started to jam. And, man, you know what? It was cool after practice when we went out to the local cocktail bar, and discussed the merits of a return to a tribal Earth. But, now, my friend, it is time to call you out.

The only practical forum that I could think of doing this in was the letters page of *MRR*. Why? Because, I'm pretty sure you read this magazine. I'm not too sure though. I haven't been over your place in awhile, but I think I saw some issues lying around on your dining room table under a bunch of old *Hit Parader* magazines. So, Eggs, here it is: You were late for practice and I'm pretty sure everyone in the band is pretty pissed off at you about it. I mean, come on, how hard was it to show up at 9:30 PM? Eventually, around 9:49 PM, you did roll in. Laughing about some shit that didn't even make sense to any of us, but we laughed anyways because you are the drummer of our group. Remember all those times, we would joke with each other and quote Zappa, saying "Suzy Creamcheese, what's got into you?" Well, I got something to say now, that *you* can quote me on, "Eggs, what's got into you"? You have two other bands, just joined Pay Toilets, and your new solo project under the name of "Mike Fucking Ovens"—do you not have time for Brain Handle anymore? We have a new record coming out, I think. It might even be out already, what do I know? I need to hear from you. I need an explanation on why you were late for practice. Your hair is getting longer and it's starting to look really cool.
Signed,
—Maple Leaf

Dear Maximum Rocknroll—
Hi. How are you all doing? My people on the street informed me you sent me a compilation that *MRR* put out for the inconvenience or the *924 Gilman Book*'s binding falling apart, and that you explained that they all like that. I appreciate the CD and your responding back but…I still feel it is your responsibility to inform buyers before the purchase that the binding is not done correctly, therefore the book will ultimately fall apart. Just 'cause you guys might have gotten ripped off going through this particular company doesn't make it right to pass the damaged product onto unknowing customers, especially without a warning or even discount!

Anyway, besides that gripe, I really appreciate the entertainment, news, and quality reading *MRR* has brought to me off and on over the years. While incarcerated it's helped me stay in touch with the on-goings of the punk scene (new bands and old), and helped me stay grounded in my head through all the madness inside.

Believe it or not, prison can be a very un-punk rock place. Lots of inbred redneck types, fascist politics, violent gangs, assholes, wanna-be Nazi skinhead types, lots of racism, and just pure ignorance. A lot of people *equal shit* in here! I was a product of this environment for many years. I let it consume me and distort my thinking, and I drifted away from the "true punx" spirit. All I can say is life is but a learning experience and I'm glad to be back and broken free…

I owe it to different people in the punk scene and community, *MRR*, etc to show me there is alternatives and different ways to deal with living in a *mad* world. Life can be a positive experience. *MRR* also provided me with lots of good contacts, recommendations on books that helped educate, enlighten, and liberate my mind from this place we call prison. Also, you've turned me onto many good zines.

Through the years I have met many righteous individuals. Met many of true punx with DIY ideals. Even a few real skinheads that hang on to their culture roots. Some activists (ones that truly care for their people/fellow inmates), but sad to say that's far and few between in these places, and seems we all stand alone (the silent minority/outcast family). Hypocrisy, lies, and corruption runs rampant in these places. Most don't see that it probably comes from the administration. The oldest trick in the book, divide and conquer and the spread of deceit and false information.

Anyway, not to thrive on the negative again, but I no longer have to wallow in this shit or let it hold me down. I will be paroling hopefully September, 19th—back to Sacto. I will be residing in the suburbs of the Citrus Heights/Orangevale area.

I'd like help and do voluntary work with venues or Food Not Bombs or anyone from the Sacramento Pyrate Punx chapter. Please contact me. I can volunteer my time for free. I am clean and sober and can be found at the NA café and Auburn Blvd. A lot. I will be on parole and plan on going to meetings a lot. I want to do positive things and give back to the community, and I want to beat this parole and take my life back!

I want my punk rock family back. My address on the streets is: Greg Busby 6218 Rebel Circle, Citrus Heights, CA . Or reach me at poser77@hotmail.com. Anyone from Sacto or the surrounding scenes feel free to contact me.
Oi!, punk rock, psychobilly, ska—that's all!
Keep it alive,
—Greg Busby

Holy Shit!—
I had to check the cover of the issue #304 repeatedly to see what fucking year it was! Pettibon? Stabb?? WTF?! Plus, the boring as fuck Simply Saucer BS?! Is this becoming a fucking nostalgia mag?! On top of that whining, what the *fuck* is up with this lame fascination with the '80s?! Why parrot bands your parents listened to? Shit, it is getting as bad as the '80s actu-

LETTERS

ally *were*!! OK, maybe I just don't get it 'cuz I'm *old*—I got into punk 30 years ago this summer and almost *never* listen to shit from then. Gimme some goddamn Iron Lung, Endless Blockade, Unholy Grave, whatever—something *now* for fuck's sake. And *what* the fuck is up with Sex Vid? Man, that *Nests* 7" is as boring as Pettibon's art! Otherwise, keep up the …work! Lance's (RIP) retro shit is great. Interviewer that is too nervous to fetch the Q?
—the Bald Old Punk

Hey Bald Old One—
Yes, we at MRR *are intent on preserving punk rock as one would a mummy at a museum. I would way rather listen to an old man bitch about the good old days than anything else I can think of! However, this "interviewer that was too nervous to fetch the Q" thinks that seeing Pettibon as a mere nostalgia piece is a little strange considering the man made his name as an artist pretty much as soon as your hated '80s were over. He's one of the most important contemporary artists currently working. I imagine Sex Vid will be fucking psyched you think they are as "boring" as Pettibon's art. We run close to a hundred interviews of current bands every year, but more to the point: Everything we print is sent in by punks like you. If you, reader, think we are lacking something in terms of coverage, write a scene report, interview a band. DIY.*
—Layla

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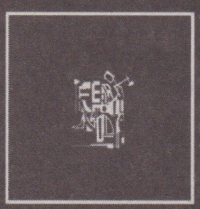

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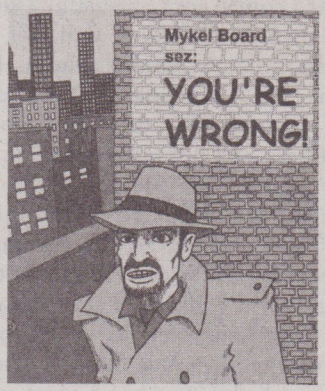

"America has Race Fever. It's not an actual race war, but a sort of racial Cold War. A grinding war of nerves. And it's impossible to escape. A race war would be anticlimactic at this point." —Jim Goad

[Note: This is my *last* column about race and the elections. I promise! Next month, something more personal... from Trinidad and Venezuela. This will *not*, however, be the last column where I talk (about) shit. I *love* shit.]

When girls shit do they do something dainty? Me? I pinch a loaf. Lay some cable. Drown the chocolate slugs. Slash the brown trout. Macho, tough-sounding excrement. What do girls do? Drop some daisies? Plant the coffee beans? Dot the i's?

I've talked with a lot of girls about shitting. Sadly, the biological process doesn't satisfy them as much as it does the testicular-ed class.

"It's just something you do," says Miranda. "Like taking out the garbage or washing the dishes."

"I do those things every month," I tell her. "I don't feel especially pleased afterwards."

"Exactly!" she says, as if that proved something.

"That's sad," I tell her. "It feels so good. Like shoving a carrot up your ass. Only in reverse."

"If you say so Mykel," she says.

"Okay then," I ask her. "What do you call it? When girls have to *paint the porcelain* or *dunk the brown klaxton*?"

"What the fuck are you talking about, Mykel?" she asks. "We just do it. Do you have a special name for *washing the dishes*? It's just something you do."

BINGO!

Of course! You only have special names for things that are special. You have euphemisms, funny names, tech-speak, graphic language—all this to describe what's important, fun, sexy. If taking a shit doesn't mean shit to you, you don't need a special name for it.

That's why I decided to again write about the up-coming election. Though, by the time you read this, McCain may have already been sworn in.

In any case, it's important to talk about language. I wrote about *nigger* before. This time, I want to write more about language and race. How we use special words for what's important. How words themselves make us think in a certain way. How language can confuse or obfuscate.

"Tom McCain doesn't have a racist bone in his body," says Joe Lieberman after McCain makes some racist remark.

I wonder about this. Where is the *racist bone?* I don't remember one from science class. And I sure spent a lot of time with that anatomy textbook.

I check ask.com. It says that the human body has 206 bones. I check out the names. No *racist* bone. Maybe *nobody* has a racist bone.

I finally find a diagram of the appendage. You can see it at: http://tinyurl.com/6kev4r,if your browser will let you.

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[Aside: tinyurl.com is a free website where you enter a long URL and it changes it to a short URL, starting with: tiny.com. For example, you find something cool at: http://www.something-cool.com/pg8/analanomolies/ref#42/~leslies/432.23. You plug it into tinyurl.com. The website generates a much shorter address, maybe tinyurl.com/321abc. That's what you forward to your friends. Great service,right?

Well, spammers found the site is also useful for covering tracks. They put in their spam addresses. Tinyurl generates another, untraceable, address. Then the spammers use that one.

So, like in airports, where security security security trumps convenience, free speech, free movement, free anything, some browsers and some websites (like MySpace) block *all* tinyurl addresses. They *might* be spam, you see. Better safe than, I dunno—annoyed?

Fuck security! One of these days we'll be so secure we won't be able to do anything! But we'll be safe.]

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If you can't get to the picture on your browser, I'll describe it. The racist bone is at the tip of the right thumb. It's not clear whether it's the entire upper digit, or just a small extra growth. But that's where it is.

Is this fact? The picture is an artist's rendition, not an actual photo. It may be in the artist's mind; a figment of his idiomatic imagination. I still can't find a person who has one to show.

No one brags, or even thinks about the racist bone unless they *don't* have one. The lack of that bone defines it. I google for someone who *has* a racist bone, and is proud of it—I can't find anyone. Everyone denies it: Nope, not me. Not a racist bone.

Maybe it's like *holding a candle to* something. You only find people or things that *can't* hold a candle to other people or things. If someone *can* hold a candle to something, you don't hear about it.

I bring this racist bone thing up to a Democrat pal of mine. She wears an Obama campaign button bigger than Obama himself. She once clobbered a Ralph Nader supporter for "giving us George Bush."

"So," I tell her, "I've been looking for the racist bone. The one that John McCain doesn't have one of in his body. I heard it's at the end of the thumb. Which bone do you think is the racist bone?"

"They all are," she says.

BINGO!

We're all racists. At least all of us in America in 2008. We live, breath, and think race. Race is what we first notice

about others (unless they have a physical handicap. Then *that's* first). Race is what we're drawn to or repelled by. It's what completes the phrase *"Some of my best friends are..."* We're all racist. We have to be as much as we have to shit. Now I'm beginning to see. But wait! There's more...

Besides bones, there're cards. This or that politician is *playing the race card*. That's even harder to find than the racist bone. I locate a chart of the picture cards in a 52-card deck.

I figure that *the race card* must be one of the picture cards, not a number card. Except for *the Ace of Spades* I can't imagine how the numbered cards would have anything to do with race.

For the picture cards, I find out the King of Hearts is Charlemagne. The Queen of Hearts is Judith (of the *Book of Judith*, an "Apocryphal Book of the Bible." Something Christian, I guess). The Jack of Hearts is "La Hire," a famous French warrior. The King of Spades is King David of Jewish Star fame. The Queen of Spades is Pallas, a.k.a. Minerva. The Jack of Spades is Hogier the Dane, one of Charlemagne's paladins. (What the fuck is a *paladin?*) The King of Diamonds is Julius Caesar. The Queen of Diamonds is Rachel (of the Bible). The Jack of Diamonds is Hector of Troy or Roland of France. (I've heard of neither.) The King of Clubs is Alexander the Great. The Queen of Clubs is an anagram of Regina, all the queens of England put together. And the Jack of Clubs is Lancelot.

Except for the Jews, David and Rachel, the rest of 'em seem like generic white Europeans; one, not much different from the others. Which is the race card? And how exactly do you play it? No telling from this chart.

I go to Ask.com and ask, *"Which card is the race card?"*

For an answer I get some references to people playing that card (always negative, usually involved with politics), and some sponsored ads for Visa and American Express—not very useful.

As any student-with-a-last-minute deadline has learned, when you want well researched and consistently incorrect answers, you go to Wikipedia. This is what it says about *the race card*:

"Playing the race card is an idiomatic phrase referring to an allegation against a person who has brought the issue of race or racism into a debate. It is a metaphorical reference to card games in which a trump card may be used to gain an advantage.

The phrase is commonly used in two contexts. First, it alleges that someone has deliberately and falsely accused another person of being a racist to gain some sort of advantage.

An example of this occurred during the O.J. Simpson criminal trial, when critics accused the defense of "playing the race card" in presenting Mark Fuhrman's racist past as a reason to draw his credibility as a witness into question.

In the second context, it refers to someone exploiting prejudice against another race for political or some other advantage. The use of the southern strategy by a political candidate is said to be a version of "playing the race card", like when former Senator Jesse Helms ran an ad showing a black man taking a white man's job. The ad was interpreted as trying to play to racist fears among white voters.

On the other hand, George Dei and Karumanchery, in their book Playing the Race Card, argue that the term itself is a rhetorical device used to devalue and minimize claims of racism."

BINGO!

That's it! The charge of *playing the racist card* is racist! It's a racist attempt to either inject race or falsely take race out of the sphere of debate. It's using race, and, in a racist way, tries to invalidate it.

The American presidential election in 2008 is all about race. No bones. No cards. No nothin'. No matter what Obama says. No matter how awful his religious proclamations, his self-cultishness, his stupid Russia bashing or his fawning over war in Afghanistan—no matter what, this is about race.

For the first time, America has a real chance to put a political end to the racism that's defined America since the Constitution. It has a chance to trump the racist card. To break the racist bone.

Every voter has a duty to put the period on the 200-years-of-slavery sentence. Negroes were slaves. Now one can be president. If this fails (and I believe it will. Americans are just too... well... racist... to allow a colored president), America will fail again, and continue being the most evil country on earth.

If it succeeds, the America disease will not be cured over night. Objectively, America may not get any better. But we will have won with the race card. We can finally make it as valuable as any other card in the deck.

Am I saying that *not* voting for Obama is racist? Am I saying that even if you vote for Nader or don't vote at all, you're committing a racist act? Am I saying that voting against Obama because you don't like his stand on religion in government, or the Afghan war, or gay marriage, is *still* racist?

Yes! That's exactly what I'm saying. Not voting for Barack Obama is racist. Bone or no bone. card or no card. Race isn't the main issue here. It's the only issue.

Endnotes: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get more endnotes (there's a new column length limit at MRR), live links and a chance to email comments on the column. Subscribers will not get the columns any earlier than anyone else.]

—>*Target practice dept:* King Abudullah of Saudi Arabia has offered his country as a meeting place. Who for? "Representatives of the world's monotheistic religions." Why? "To discuss how to 'shore up faith' in a world of 'declining family values and rising non-belief.'"

Says the king, "The idea is to ask representatives of all monotheistic religions to sit together with their brothers in faith and sincerity to all religions."

Wow! What an opportunity! The leaders of all the world's monotheistic religions together in the desert. Makes you think of one giant bulls eye, doesn't it?

—>*Pervert dept:* This year, Police arrested Michael Bessigano for downloading bestiality images from the internet! Who knew *that* was illegal? I dunno, maybe it violated the conditions of his parole.

In 2002 he was convicted of having sex with a chicken, and in 1993 for "a matter involving a dog." Two years in jail for sex with a chicken... probably getting raped there. That's supposed to cure him? Maybe it'll cure him of his animal love so he can start raping humans, like normal people do.

—>*More jailbird's addresses dept*: I think I already wrote about Cassidy. He's been in the clink for ages for stealing a pair of socks. He's put together a prison project, collecting real pictures taken by real folks from places around the world. If you've got some good ones, send 'em to him: Cassidy Wheeler, #14282456, 82911 Beach Access Road, Umatilla OR 97882.

—>*Sometimes I forget how much I love Mexicans dept:* Yowsah! My pal Gilberto tells me that Sucieded Discriminada is coming to New York. 40-plus-year-old punks, still doing it! (From Sonora in North Mexico. I'm there [ABC No Rio].)

The Mexis are sandwiched by two

younger punk bands, both Boston based. I like 'em both and *both* of 'em give me free recorded material. A three-CD set from Max and the Marginalized (maxandthemarginalized.com). Their shtick? They write, record and post a news song every week. That's not a typo. They write *news* songs. Topical stuff. Like about Lou Dobbs. One a week—talk about productivity! One of these columns a month kills me, and I don't have to worry about a drummer!

Speaking of drummers, the other gringo band: Libyans, has the best drummer I've seen this century. Amazing!! He's only in two bands. That's because he lives in Boston. In NY, he'd be in 40! Punk rock with a girl singer too! Contact: thelibyans@gmail.com.

As for the Mexis: Holy Frito Bandito. Great show! Complete with rubber masks of famous Mexican politicos. I danced with one over my head. It did not smell of nachos.

Contact them at www.geocities.com/suciedaddiscriminada.

—>*They've started coming—me too dept:* I wanna thank Dick Berger and Tom Washington for the homemade DVD they sent me. Yeah, I believe your names are Dick and Tom like I believe America invaded Iraq for *humanitarian reasons.* But thanks in any case, by any name. It's a DVD that'll get a lot of use. And Dick, that's a nice Tom you've got there.

Keep those things coming. Send me your homemade sex tapes. As usual, I'm at POB 137, Prince St. Station, NYC 10012 USA.

Back in the day I had this idea for a zine called P.I.G.S. (people in general suck). It was all stories about fools that tried my patience. There were over three million stories. I'm finally editing it (it's coming out on the fifth of never). Here's an excerpt:

I want to vent some black boy punk stress ALL OVER YOU ('cause it's very overdue). I was standing at this burger joint by my house when this gooch-ass black yuppie motherfucker (he had a dyed grey streak, okay?) started fucking with me. "Damn brother man. I don't know where you're from but this is Oakland. A Go-Go's shirt? Really? Them white boys you live with can get away with wearing tight pants. You can't." The thing was I had been living in Oakland five years, and was basically dressed the way I had ever since I was a *tween.* No fallin' off the turnip truck yesterday for me.

I was a grown ass man, and I actually lived in this neighborhood and had *never* seen this fucker. He was styled out all gross, and it sounded like he was a lot more uncomfortable in his skin in this neighborhood than I was and was trying desperately to make me his mirror. It would of worked, but I'm very particular about whose bitch I'll be, and he didn't make the cut. I was going to tell him I was wearing a Go-Go's t-shirt because my band played with them, but then I remembered that I don't talk to assholes if I can help it. I said thanks for the advice *very sarcastically* and gave him the hairy eyeball until he got it and didn't say shit else to me.

Then the flip side:

I lived with this white boy who was complaining about the brothers in the neighborhood. I could feel him somewhat as I could testify that there are those brothers in Oakland that will *definitely* fuck with you. "Thugs," rednecks, skinheads and jocks all blur together to me as they all have the unifying characteristics of being big and wanting to hurt you. His rant began to annoyingly lean on the whole "I don't want to be a white minority" bullshit that I never really understood. This person complained about "the honky problem" in San Francisco and then moves to Oakland to and complains about angry black people. I told him he should rob a bank and move to a rich white neighborhood and see how those motherfuckers treat his dirty, weird, tattooed ass when he lets twelve of his friends move in and start having shows.

The doorbell rings and it was two girls who had lived there before. One liked serial killers and always tried to convince me that "nigga" and "dude" are interchangeable words. The other was this girl who was sometimes *kool* but would always find a way to complain to me about how she *specifically* did not appreciate the way black guys (in particular) hit on her. She said it was always only black guys. Other races of men (including her own) ignored her. One time I asked her to stop saying nigger to me and she said it five times in a row. I felt better when she moved out and just forgot about it and never forgave her.

Why did I live there? I remembered something my mother told me: "Ignorant white people outnumber you." But wait! I wasn't outnumbered! Everyone else I lived with were chill potheads like me. I pay cheap rent. I can bang on drums loudly. I can record a one-man punk band here. I belong here.

I went to my room, turned out the lights, and counted to ten very slowly, and pushed their evil out of my mind. I win.

Love,
Brontez

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

I wrote a column a couple months ago that detailed my disgust with the "salad days" mentality, and it was met with a range of responses. People tend to be pretty sensitive and condescending towards young people, and punks are no exception. I'm not interested in patronizing younger people; the reason punk shows have become so stale in my country is that young people aren't becoming involved in an interesting way. Older punks tend to be very interested in pandering to the imagined interests of young people, and this in turn makes young people pathetic and lazy, interested in pandering to the interests of these older punks who have become surrogate parents.

The result is a very non-confrontational punk scene with relaxed sincere political convictions, and my trip to the US confirmed this is no local problem. It seems punks get older and try to make life easier for younger punks by organizing shows that they don't need to risk anything getting into, having a safe and non-violent atmosphere that they won't feel threatened or weirded out in, and home in bed by 12 a.m. with a stack of new colour vinyl to compare with friends over Facebook like their *pog* collections ten years ago.

The bottom line is that historically if anything interesting in punk happened it was because a few people took initiative and worked hard to make themselves

heard in the face of being dismissed / ignored / fucked with. If Greg Ginn had been nurtured and coddled by RAMONES-esque local bands out to "create a scene" so "the kids could have their say," BLACK FLAG would have been called THE LOUDMOUTH BABYS and would've lasted six weeks of all ages afternoon shows with impressed older folk stifling yawns but impressed at this "teen outrage," woulda cut a single for Bomp!, which would've been rejected, and Greg would've been back with the soldering iron.

Awww ... fuck. Let's talk about foreigners for a while. When on tour with STRAIGHTJACKET NATION, we were able to play a couple of shows with Spanish band INVASION, who were touring on their new 12". A member of their touring party, Hector, who also plays in OTAN, was dubbing copies of a compilation tape of Barcelona punk, which I was able to listen to twice before losing it. Rather than wait another couple of weeks to listen to it again before reviewing it—and making the usual mistake reviewers make in complicating a compilation review with paragraph after paragraph discussing the banal details of each particular track—I'll let the liner notes speak for themselves. Printed in Spanish in the tape, I was able to convince INVASION guitarist Marat to translate it into English. An All Foreign Junk exclusive, if you will.

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"We come from a time (not that distant either) when punks would record tapes for one another and send them by mail. It was nice. New products of capitalism swept away this way of meeting and communication from one day to another. Today it is anonymity and convenience that are important; it's not that the tape isn't a capitalist product, but it's been buried below an avalanche of consumerism.

The new formats that have replaced the tape aren't better or even necessary—in the logic of the market, the only important thing is its own growth, not to satisfy people, or maybe satisfying them just enough to keep them consuming. We choose the tape because it allows us to be more autonomous, and it's a format that reflects what we want to do a little more. Even though the format isn't the most important thing, what we are really trying to promote is autonomy, exchange, and direct and honest communication.

The songs on this tape are made by groups that recorded and released their own music, and are mostly taken from demo; it's not a complete selection of Barcelona punk bands, it´s a personal selection of what we are into right now. There are more things happening in Barcelona—some don´t interest us at all, others just didn´t fit in this project. This is a comp of friends and people that are united by a way of doing things, and of bands that have something interesting to say.

The city oppresses and disgusts us. Within it you find all the miseries of civilization. These bands are for us one of the few good things that Barcelona offers. They transmit energy and anger, not just to be able to withstand the city, but to confront it.

Thanks. Salut i Anarquia."

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And while we're on the subject of INVASION, I interviewed the members of the band. A sample of this interview was quoted in a previous column when discussing the INVASION debut LP, but here is the complete interview. INVASION's two 12" records are excellent hardcore records.

Talk a little about how the band came together. What kind of life were you living at the time? Work? School? Crime?

GUILLE: INVASIÓN started in winter 2004. Guillem (guitar) and I were at some show or something that was going on at the anarchist social center where OTAN practice, and he told me he had a really cool riff he wanted to show me, so we went to the practice space, and Jose (from INSOMNIO) sat on the drums. The song was "Destruction." I had been recording OTAN I think, or had my P.A. there for some reason, which has a delay effect, so I started singing with the delay, and sounded great—at least that's what we thought, so we felt we had to do something with that. Jose is from Zaragoza, so we asked Imanol (SIBERÏA) to play drums, and Marat to play Bass. We recorded a four-track demo in 2005 and played a couple shows before Imanol left the band—then Requena joined, and we played two shows in 2006. Marat and I went to Portland for three months, and when we got back, Requena had a new job and no time for the band, so we talked to Albert who played and plays in OTAN to join until we found a drummer, and has been playing since then.

MARAT: Fuck, I don't think anything then was really too different from now. I've never been to university. I was working, then delivering used furniture, and sadly my crimes are and have always been pretty petty: shoplifting, squatting, and whatnot. Apart from working (sometimes) and punk, in those days as now I try to participate in political initiatives that are not related to music. I was involved in prison abolition and prisoner support for a while. Lately I've been interested solidarity with different squatting projects in Brazil.

GUILLE: Yes, everything was pretty much the same: shitty jobs, no studies, pretty much broke all the time, and well, not too much crime actually.

Tell us a little about the town you are from and the area you live. How do you see INVASION being a part of or a reaction to your town?

MARAT: I'm not originally from Barcelona but I've lived here long enough to tell you a bit about it. Barcelona sucks. The city tries to pawn itself off as a city of design, but it's more like a city of image, with nothing behind. It's noisy and dusty and always under construction to make it more "European." People from Barcelona are fucking snobs compared to the rest of Spain. The only reason I stay is for these bands I'm in—if they broke up I'd split. I play hardcore because I love hardcore, not because I live in a fucked up place. There are enough things in this world to influence us to play pissed off music, but living in Barcelona definitely doesn't hurt. I have to say Barcelona has a really good punk scene now. It's great that we can find people here that are interested in what we do and have good bands to play with. We share a practice space with six or seven other bands and every one of them is good!

GUILLE: I have to say Barcelona really affects me when it comes to writing the lyrics, although lyrics are pretty simple. Living in this city (which fucking alienates you and strangles you, making it so fucking hard to live without spending large amounts of money) is a big influence to this band. Really I think this city brings the worst in everyone, and at the end of the day feels like there's *nothing* worth it in this town. Actually the song "Claustrofobia" talks about Barcelona, and the song "Bastardos" talks about an encounter with Barcelona cops a couple years ago. Being able to do INVASION really helps to deal with my everyday life and not sink with frustration.

GUILLEM: I try working as little as I

can—this way I can use my time to do what I really like: building and repairing guitars, screen printing, and making noise. Talking about Barcelona is like talking about a trap. It's a city where you feel trapped and with very few options to do something. High rents make you have to work constantly, without being able to save some money. It's turning into a city for rich people and getting harder to put up shows. People here suck. I wish this city would turn into a giant fireball and was destroyed into ashes.

ALBERT: I'm from Badalona—a city next to Barcelona, some kind of suburb from Barcelona. I grew up in a humble neighborhood with gypsies, junkies, Nazis and lots of crime. Something that makes you explode. Living in a city such as Badalona and now in Barcelona, having to deal with all the shit around you makes you either follow it or explode. So some of us decide to vent all our frustration with political activities and playing angry music full of hate—such as punk. Punk bands are a reflection of what you deal with in your daily life, so what you might feel listening to INVASION is what you can feel living in the guts of this city.

Could you talk now a little bit about Spain and Spanish punk history? I don't know very much about it, so perhaps you could give a little perspective on significant events historically. Also, could you give an idea of how you see INVASION fitting into or outside of this history?

MARAT: I'm pretty sure I'm not the right person to tell you about Spanish history. Lots and lots of ink has been spilled writing about the revolution and the civil war, the dictatorship and the resistance to it, and the so called "transition" to democracy. I find a lot of this fascinating, but I don't presume to be a good person to summarize any of it. It's been years since I read Murry Bookshin's *The Spanish Anarchists*, but it made a big impact on me. I've recently read Abel Paz's biography of Durruti, which also gives a good overview of anarchist movement of the early 1900's. I recommend both books.

As far as Spanish punk history goes, I'd say the same—that I'm not the best person to tell you about it. I think that Spain has a very large punk history and has produced as many great bands as more hyped scenes like Japan or Sweden. Why they remain largely unknown outside of Spain and Latin America is a mystery to me. I don't really know what to say in this limited space. There are two bands that made a massive impact: LA POLLA RECORDS and ESCORBUTO—the former I find horrible while the latter is incredible. If you can listen to these bands and understand them, it's a good start to understanding what punks where thinking about in the '80s. But I think these bands reached their popularity due to the longevity and activity of the bands. They had lots of contemporaries that have been forgotten. As far as significant events go, I don't think that there is really one band or one show or one festival that changed everything. The histories that interest me are the plural ones, not the histories of the Sex Pistols or the Ramones. But telling the stories of the people or even of the punks is a lot of work, especially for a little interview.

I find this "if we fit into the history of Spanish punk" question really hard to answer, and it gives me lots to think about. We don't play with old bands. There are no bands that have continued playing since the '80s. When they have reformed they don't play in the places that we do. I guess I could see a historical connection with the '90s bands SIN DIOS or E-150 (to give a couple well-known examples), but I think it's because I've seen those bands and know people from those bands. I love RIP and IV REICH and ANTIDOGMATICKS, but a common history? It's hard for me to see. It feels like those bands are really distant. But yeah, we play punk, are from Spain, and share values and a way of doing things.

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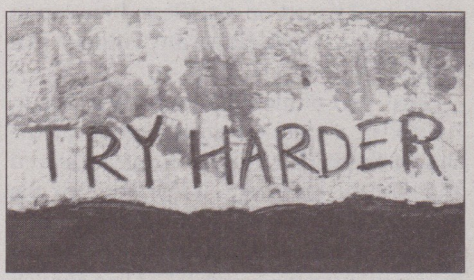
Enough of Spain, let's talk about France. No, fuck, let's not talk about France. Let's talk about France's finest band, THE ANALS, and their single on Sweet Rot: "Commando of Love b/w Wake Up Your Dead." THE ANALS play synth-punk that sounds very heavily indebted to Tomata Du Plenty. Their music is very ignorant sounding, which I find particularly endearing when dealing with the traditionally sensitive and intellectual-friendly synthesizer. I have a huge amount of appreciation for this instrument in all it's incarnations, whether used for good (pop) or evil (punk), though obviously there's no point discussing the finer moments of Gary Numan here. There is, however, a point to discussing the finer points of the SCREAMERS (who if you are unfamiliar with, I highly recommend you pursue one of the many bootlegs of their demos and live recordings).

Since its inception, the synth has become primarily associated with neon colours, Californian beach scenes, fake fags and disco. SCREAMERS were one of the bands that best managed to redirect its sonic potential towards drab colours and tones, dirty LA back alleys, real fags and punk. THE ANALS, French creeps, have recorded a perfect gratifying tribute to the sound and feel of the evil synth—sticky with semen and sweat, and that first generation of European bands that managed to do the same. There are a few early French Kraftwerk / Gary Numan-influenced new wave weirdo bands, and a compilation of these tracks called *Bippp* has been released. I've only heard a few of these songs, but there are a couple on there which hold moments of dark wave / synth punk potential, and I have heard some great early frog shit that probably resulted as a reaction to this. THE ANALS sound like the logical extension of this: a two-piece drums / gtr / synth piece of brainless horny noise. Tres bien. Get fucked with THE ANALS.

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distortthe world@gmail.com.



As I try to lean over most of the piss puddle to tape an "out of order" sign to the urinal's makeshift trash bag covering, there is nastiness seeping in the sides of my shoes. My right foot slips and I catch myself on the handle, saving me from a face first tumble into the urinal, but instead sending another little wave of pee water over my shoes.

It's already been a long day, full of problem after problem: the bands are late, there are not enough volunteers, not enough small bills for change—but as of then, no injuries, no fights, no vomit… it's not as bad as it could be, not as bad as it

has been.

I start laughing at the sad little list of things I'm thankful haven't happened yet.

I laugh harder when I realize that I'm not alone in the bathroom and that to the boys sheepishly crowded near the door I must look bizarre, awkwardly bent over the urinal laughing to myself, one hand now tangled in the duct tape I was trying to employ.

I reach a hand out and one of the boys helps me to drier ground, and they all begin to chuckle with me about my ridiculous situation.

"Shit, I hope you're getting paid extra for taking care of this," the tallest says, headed for the stall with a door.

"No way, you couldn't pay me enough to do this."

Blank perplexed stares.

In a culture that values money above all else it seems hard to explain the satisfaction of giving your time and labor freely to anyone, besides those already well acquainted with working in volunteer-run collectives.

My mother tends to portray it as altruism. She tells her friends, "Ari works with at-risk youth," which in itself is too crazy to try and correct. Or maybe is hilariously correct, but misleadingly vague. Yes, the people I work with (my co-workers) are sometimes pretty young, and are, if it's a good night, totally at risk of getting into some kind of mischief—but then so am I. But the kind volunteering I'm talking about isn't based on a selfless devotion to others, it's work like any other, just unpaid.

Sure, part of the time I work for money. I work in a steel fabrication shop at the end of the BART line, in an underserved and violent little city at the edge of the East Bay. I work in a steel box inside of a bigger steel box that is always hotter or colder than seems natural. I sit in a swiveling chair, stare at a screen making figures add up. I'm not particularly good at it. I don't think anyone can be good at that kind of work—it's automatic. It's like breathing, but more boring. But I don't work there for fulfillment: I work to eat, to pay rent, to have some cash on hand to buy things I want or need (records, paint, cans of mock duck, plastic cameras, etc., etc.).

The real work I do, the most valuable time I spend, I do for free, for the joy of doing. Like the work I do as a show coordinator at 924 Gilman St.

There the work itself has intrinsic value. To be given money for it would cheapen it; would break the magic spell that makes it all worthwhile.

Why? Because as soon as you begin to accept money for work you begin to calculate the value of your work in terms of hours and in terms of dollars. You begin to say, what can my time buy me? (Or how much money is it worth to wade through the mini pee lake in the dank grimy bathroom to tape up the urinal?)

Whereas, unpaid work is valued by the people it helps, the art it creates, the world it inspires. Or in my case, the crisis it averts, the shows it keeps running, and the bands it supports.

And make no mistake: I'm no martyr, no lone figure fighting selflessly to keep punk's head above water. I am just a part of a community of volunteers, and a scene of punks committed to keeping the place open, to keep it thriving. I know what I do helps in that aim, and there is the value, there is my pay. And no money is worth that feeling. It's fucking free.

But still, you ask, why not earn a living doing what you love? Like say, playing music? As soon as you make your music a product you depend on for your life's expenses, the shift in emphasis will swing immediately from playing to selling, from moving bodies to moving units. Soon to follow are all the hallmarks of a corporately marketed band: a press kit, a booking agent, a glossy 8 x 10, and a repulsive air of entitlement. In that moment everything good and true and punk about your band will start to die.

Even in bands who know better than to try to make a living off of it, who consider themselves as punk as can be, I've seen a worrying trend developing. It happened gradually, almost imperceptibly, that less and less of them freely give their money to other bands after I pay them at the club. It used to be common, every band would give most if not all their pay to the touring band, maybe keep a couple bucks for bridge toll, but that was all. There are definitely still bands that do that, but less and less of them. It also used to be bands would regularly give money back to the club, but that's so rare that I am surprised when it does happen.

It seems there was this code of conduct among bands that has started falling away. A general sense of camaraderie is still there, don't get me wrong, but the generosity is what I see less of.

There are expenses to being in a band, I know (my band is currently a couple grand in debt after putting out a bunch of vinyl), but on a show with one or more touring bands you can't convince me they don't need the money more.

Shit, you can't convince me that the money should matter at all to local bands.

Another place I see a rampant and gross use of price to equate value is in record collecting. In any conversation about records, particularly about older ones, it seems inevitable that someone will pipe up with a report of how much something went for on eBay, the ridiculous price adds a layer of mystique to the record, and whether or not anyone in the group would deem it to be good, suddenly they must concede that it is valuable.

You can almost hear the gears turning. "If it's valuable, lots of people want it or are willing to pay exorbitant amounts for it, therefore it must have something about it, maybe something I don't get. Better think twice about how I feel about it."

This kind of thinking is in opposition to everything punk is about, so why are we all a little bit guilty of it? It's because we don't overtly think it, it's just lurking there in the back of our minds—the product of a culture dazzled by money, and obsessed with getting their due.

Jobs that pay more (or at all) aren't better jobs, expensive records aren't better records, and just because your band gets paid doesn't mean that you can't give it away.

***

From the *'this is why we can't have nice things'* dept:

The Long Haul info shop in Berkeley was raided by a cooperating task force of University of California police, FBI agents, and Alameda County Sheriffs. News sources point to the recent surge in ALF activity at UC Santa Cruz and UC Berkeley as the cause. At least one source suggested the raid was due to threatening emails traced to the info shop. The first outrage is, of course, at the space being broken into, that the warrant is inappropriately non-specific, and that the computers that aid in publishing the *Slingshot* newspaper, as well as computers belonging to organizations renting office space in the Long Haul were seized, not just the Long Haul's free access computers.

This, however, ought to be a lesson to us.

Our radical free spaces are vulnerable, and if you are going to be doing some online activism and want to remain anonymous, send your shit from the fuck-

ing library! (They're not about to seize all the library's computers... not yet anyway.) Or maybe a bougie internet café. Not from a valued space that is already a target. The point is to be careful, and be aware of where your actions can be traced.

We know they're out to get us; lets not leave a trail of breadcrumbs.

Donate to the Long Haul by PayPal (to info@thelonghaul.org) or send a check to 3124 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley, CA 94705. Make checks payable to "Long Haul." They'll need it for a legal defense fund, new computers and to repair damages.
Oh, and please send a dry pair of shoes to: PO Box 301, Berkeley, CA 94701 USA
And any electronic mail to arielawesome @gmail.com

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

MRR: What is a BLANK DOG?
Blank Dog: You ever been to New Haven, Connecticut?
Well, I was born there to a Canadian expatriate named Cynthia, it was a water birth y'see, her being Canadian and all she was into the mind and body and all their workings, wanted my birth to be healthy. No doctors. Anyways, I spent the first ten years of my life in New Haven, the kinda idyllic childhood that most likely don't exist anymore. And the thing about New Haven is, man, is that there are more stray dogs there than any other city in the United States. Now, I got along with most of them pups, playing with them and treatin' em right, but there was one of em, this huge white one, that was meaner than all hell.

My mother, she was a wealthy lady on account of my father's life insurance, and we kept a maid. She was a Hispanic woman, very superstitious, and she would always try to tell me that this White Dog was evil. Y'see I just thought the poor thing was misunderstood, because he was a real beautiful beast, muscled with a coat that shone day and night. Bigger than the rest of them dogs, too. Anyways, one night, me and the maid, whose name if I remember was Esmerelda, we were walkin by this little brook near my mother's home, and who do we see but the White Dog. He's limpin real bad, whimpering louder'n all hell, and he collapsed maybe ten feet in front of us.

Me, bein a curious kid, I run up and inspect the wound, but Esmeralda, she stays back, mutterin and such in Spanish. It was a bad one, alright, a buckshot wound to the hind legs. The dog layed down with a paw under his chin and stared straight ahead, right past me, right down the little trail. As if he was lookin for something. I massaged his head and murmured niceties to him, attempting to ease his suffering. He stops cryin and wailin, looks at me and gives me a bit of a lick, then stands up easy as can be and trots off, down that path he was gazing down. Esmerelda was still standin there, shook up, muttering "Blanco... blanco..." like she'd seen some kinda ghost. I thought she was calling the dog blank, you know, so the idea of a blank dog stuck with me for a while.

MRR: Do you take yourself seriously?
Blank Dog: Yeah. I get a lot of complaints that I take myself too seriously, that my songs are depressing and stuff, but they're not. A lot of them are about hope, and a lot are about dreams. Sometimes, though, you can't get what you hope to, and most often my dreams don't come true, so that's what I sing about. I'm just kidding.

MRR: Would you say you're depressed, or repressed?
Blank Dog: Usually undressed.

MRR: Why don't you just tell everyone who you are?
Blank Dog: I legally changed my name to Blank Dogs in mid-2005. You want a hint? I played bass for the Pist on their second tour.

MRR: Is Sacred Bones your record label? Do you feel like a scene is starting to sprout around that record label with Pink Noise, Nice Face, Dead Luke, etc?
Blank Dog: No. I don't mean that in a bad way, either. But most of the bands on Sacred Bones have a single member in them (at least on recordings, it can differ live), and there's not a ton of these bands to begin with. On the other hand, I usually don't listen to the bands I sign (one of my girlfriends usually does this for me), so they could all be the Temple City Kazoo Orchestra for all I know. Maybe there're hundreds of members. Perhaps thousands.

MRR: Did you know the guy from Pink Reason has a foot fetish?
Blank Dog: All too well. You should note, however, that his admiration for feet isn't sexual—it's purely platonic. The man admires a shapely foot, much as a man like me would admire a pure bread horse or a well-maintained automobile.

MRR: You live in New York—why?
Blank Dog: New Haven became too expensive to live in, and I needed a cheap alternative. Rent is at an all-time low here in Brooklyn, so I decided to snatch myself a nice place while I had the chance. I'm really happy with it.

MRR: Why have a one-man band?
Blank Dog: Well, to be honest, I don't have many friends.

MRR: What do you find appealing about electronic music vs. straight rock music? What do you think of "electronic music" as a genre?
Blank Dog: When I was growing up in New Haven, and when I was starting to get into music, there was this huge New Romantic revival around there. It was during the time when Romo was coming back, the mid 1990s (remember, this is a weird time for music), and it really interested me. I remember a kid at school, his name was Bruno, gave me a mix tape. It had Elastica, Classix Nouveaux, and Plastic Fantastic on it. I still have that tape.

Anyways, that kinda kick started my love affair with keyboards, drum machines, etcetera. I never really liked "straight rock"—it just seems really macho and I want nothing to do with that. Electronics always struck me as more intellectual. I was friends with a lot of punks growing up, which led to my brief stint in the Pist, but I was never really into the music so much. As I grew and expanded myself a bit, I realized that I could incorporate all types of music into my own art.

MRR: If you're into electronic music what do you call yourself? For example, rock fans call themselves rockers, punk fans punks—but what of electronic fans?
Blank Dog: Electricians?

MRR: You have over fifteen releases. Do you have a system for quality control over your releases?
Blank Dog: Not really. I throw things together, people want to put them out, I let em. The way I view it, is that I don't listen to the records, and it doesn't really cost me any money, so why not give them everything?

MRR: Do you have a job? What is it? How does it affect BLANK DOGS?
Blank Dog: Well, currently I'm unemployed. I got in a pretty bad accident that fucked up my legs a few years back, and I got a multi-figure settlement from that, so

I don't have to work for a little while. I blew most of it on Japanese toys and some rare *manga* (anime) that I collect, but the rest pays my rent. It leaves me with a hell of a lot of time be the Blank Dogs, that's for sure.

MRR: You use a drum machine. Do you know how to play drums? Would you ever consider using a live drummer on one of your recordings?

Blank Dog: As I said before, I think rock music is really macho, and the drums are the pinnacle of macho. I briefly considered my friend Fabrizzio Moretti as my permanent drummer, but he's in a few other bands and couldn't get the time off. One of them broke up, though, so you never know… He has a real soft style that I dig.

MRR: Do you do drugs? What's your favorite kind? Why?

Blank Dog: I used to do a lot of inhalants when I was younger—that stuff was huge in Connecticut—but I got over that when I turned twenty. Dust off, computer cleaner, all that sorta stuff. I can't say I really use many drugs now.

MRR: Does sex play a part in your music?

Blank Dog: Not particularly, though I enjoy it. Blank Dogs isn't really that sort of thing.

MRR: What kinda girls do you like?

Blank Dog: Tall ones. When I was younger I was fascinated by tall, large women, and I still have a soft spot for them. Really, though, I'll take anything with a pulse.

MRR: How did you lose your virginity?

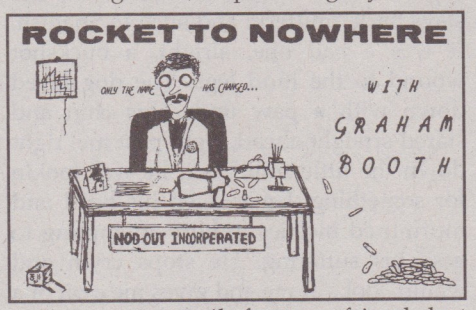
Blank Dog: What's this have to do with Blank Dogs? If you must know, I was twenty, she was older, it was painful. That's all I really want to say.

MRR: You were supposed to play Goner fest this year, and cancelled. Have you ever played live? Why or why not?

Blank Dog: I kinda had a falling out with the folks over at Goner. I'm not really into most of the stuff they put out, and I made that clear to them when they asked me to do a cover for one of their releases. The guy who runs it, he's kind of the egotistical type, so the relationship pretty much ended there, both professionally and personally. However, I've played live twice with two different backing bands. As usual, my accompaniments were all female, with one girl on bass and the other on guitar/keyboards. I played keyboards on some songs and guitar on others, and sang. It was kinda awkward the first time because we were all sitting down (it was in a small theatre in the LES), but me and the girls managed to pull through. The second time was less so. I don't think I'll make a habit of it.

MRR: Any words to other one-man bands out there?

Blank Dog: Yeah, stop stealing my shtick.!



I got an email from a friend last Saturday: "Fwd: GEMM: ***** has shipped 1 item." Included was a brief note on top of the attached message, "What I get for being up at 4:00 a.m." Hmmm, he must be writing to gloat. What a guy. So let's see why he's clogging up my inbox ... "BLACK RANDY & THE METROSQUAD PASS THE DUST I THIN LP VG+/VG+ DANGERHOUSE. $8.80." Ooof!

Sure, his Dangerhouse search finally paid off. But if there's one thing I know about my friend, he is not one for perusing long lists of records. I took this email as a direct challenge to my collecting prowess, and I had an irking suspicion that Gold would be striking again with this newfound GEMM seller. All I had to do was click on the link in his email (Yoink!) and within seconds I was combing through the rest of this seller's inventory.

That's odd. They have *a lot* of DJ/Dance 12"s. Close to 1,000 records in stock, and over half of them are 12"s. Ewwww. Better stick with the LPs. Let's see here ... 20/20 ... crap ... crap ... ATLANTICS ... looks like major label powerpop ... blah ... crap ... CHRIST CHILD ... more crap ... CORTINAS ... CRAMPS ... $13.20 ... hmm, I guess they just got a collection or something? Looks promising anyway. FLAMIN GROOVIES ... cool ... GANG OF FOUR. Man, someone musta bought all the good records ... crap ... crap ... what's this? "MISFITS *Beware* LP VG+/M—PLAN 9 PLP 9 spartan/cherry red UK $11.00." Doh! Maybe it's a bootleg. Whatever. It's $11. Buy. Buy Buy. I mean look at all the other records they have. It's all '70s and early '80s records. Why would they have a bootleg mixed in? They priced a BLACK RANDY LP at $8.80 for chrissakes!

I quickly went through the rest of their inventory in a matter of seconds and clicked "Checkout." All these pageloads and I'm already planning how I'm going to break the news to my friend. "You didn't check the rest of their stock. Did you? *We*-ell. Let's just say you might have missed something." In another moment I was reading a new message in my inbox, "GEMM: 1 Item ordered from ******" Yay. Should I just forward this or what? Well, I better wait for the shipping confirmation email just to add insult to injury. I mean I can wait 24 hours to rub it in his face, right?

Did I mention it was Saturday morning? I wonder if they will ship it out today? Or maybe they will pack it up on Sunday and mail it Monday? Whatever. I can wait until Monday to send the damn email. But god, I can't wait to break the news. This is unreal. Dare I say MISFITS *Beware* trumps that BLACK RANDY LP by a long shot. A MISFITS record for $11 on GEMM. This is big. I thought I got a huge deal on the MISFITS *Beware* already in my collection. I got that one on GEMM too, prolly ten years ago now. I distinctly remember my elation paying $30 plus postage for it. I think it was the last MISFITS record I needed, and I had been kicking myself for passing it up for $100 just a few months beforehand.

I've always liked *Beware*. MISFITS fans know it because it's the only original release that you could hear "Last Caress" on. (Certainly a contender for their best song, as stupid and misogynist as it may be.) Plus it's basically a 12" EP combining the perfect *Bullet* EP and near perfect *Horror Business* EP, less "Children in Heat." Although you know, I always thought "Children in Heat" was an underrated song. That song is super catchy and super hardcore and super awesome. You wouldn't really notice, but if you ever have the pleasure of listening to an original *Horror Business* EP, you'll flip that thing over and "Teenagers from Mars" will end and then you will be blown away by an unexpected 3rd song. That 3rd song is such a stone cold killer you may even start to doubt the greatness of "Horror Business" and, uhh, what was that other song? "CHILDREN....IN...HEE E EAT! YOU CAN'T CONTROL 'EM! hmm hmm hmmmmm" (Yeah, like you know what Danzig's saying there either!?)

Whatevs. *Beware* is rad, and a lot cheaper than buying *Bullet* and *Horror Business*. And it's my favorite MISFITS album cover (mostly for the back cover with the Crimson Ghost graphics). So tasty! I guess

people are kinda bored with collecting MISFITS stuff nowadays, especially since the MISFITS-ONLY collectors have kinda taken over and inflated prices to ridiculous levels. Yes that is lame. But looking at all those old singles: *Bullet,* with that amazing blood spattered cover, and *Horror Business,* with that pesky "Crimson Ghost" in super bright colors—there aren't many punk sleeves out there that come close.

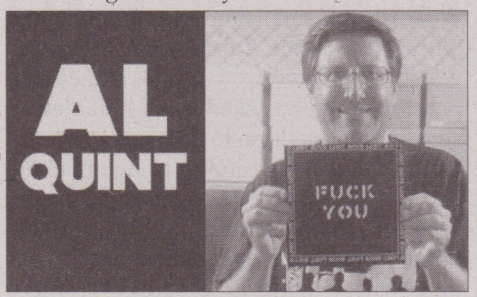
I'm glad I got all of that stuff so many years ago (god knows even then it wasn't easy!). If I ever end up having to part with my collection, the MISFITS stuff will be some of the last to go. Honestly, *Bullet* is one of the best '70s US Punk 7"s, easy Top 10 for me. Oh no, I feel a Top 10 list coming on. This might be tough.

In alphabetical order, my Top 10 '70s US Punk 7"s:

1) BLACK FLAG *Nervous Breakdown* 7" (SST), 2) CHAIN GANG *Son of Sam* 7" (Kapitalist), 3) DILS *I Hate the Rich* 7" (What?) 4) ENDTABLES *Process of Elimination* 7" (Tuesday), 5) GERMS *Lexicon Devil* 7" (Slash), 6) HUNS *Busy Kids* 7" (God), 7) MENTALLY ILL *Gacy's Place* 7" (Autistic), 8) MISFITS *Bullet* 7" (Plan 9), 9) NERVOUS EATERS *Just Head* 7" (Rat), 9) 1/8 NOTHING *Scream 'N Cry* 7" (Wide Awake), 9 1/4) PAGANS *Six and Change* 7" (Neck), 9 1/2) PLUGZ *Move* 7" (Slash), 9 3/4) MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS *Rocket To Nowhere* 7" (Moxie), 9 7/8) RHINO 39 *Xerox* 7" (Dangerhouse), 9 15/16) TAPEWORM *Break my Face* 7" (Hermaphrodite), 9 31/32) UNNATURAL AXE *They Saved Hitlers Brain* 7" (Varulven), 9 63/64) URINALS *Another* 7" (Happy Squid), 10) VOMIT PIGS *Take One* 7" (Bad Wreckords).

I am already feeling regretful for agreeing to assemble such a list. I take it all back! I will prolly be publicly fleeced for certain exclusions such as both INSULTS 45s, THE MAD *Eyeball* 7" (Disgusting), MAIDS *Back to Bataan* 7" (Anemic), VKTMS *Midget* 7" (Emergency Room) and WEIRDOS *We Got the Neutron Bomb"* 7" (Dangerhouse). Meanwhile my conscience is punishing me for excluding such unheralded '70s US Punk Classics as COUNT VERTIGO *I'm a Mutant* 7" (Cool) [May god have mercy on my soul!], DEFEX *Psycho Surfer* 7" (Wacker) [a monster 2-sider against all odds], GG ALLIN & THE JABBERS *Bored to Death* 7" (Blood) [sorry Geege!], FINGERS I*solation* 7" (Paradox) [I cannot explain it, but this is a huge fave], SLEEPERS *Seventh World* 7" (Win) [sorry Bay Area!], SNUKY TATE *Who Cares?* 7" (Blackmouth) [Sorry again Bay Area!], and VICTIMS *Annette* 7" (Plan 9). [People love to hate, but this is a bonafide monster, esp. on the B-side without the dumbest lyrics on the planet.] And then there's the glaring omission of most of the Dangerhouse roster! I am not sure I will ever sleep well again.

Back on task, I got an email Monday morning. A'all might be interested in. Vindication at long last! Now what do we have here … "GEMM: 1 item unavailable from ******." *NOOOoooooooo!* "Sorry, your item sold from the retail location before this order was received. Please accept our apologies." No apologies! I want my MISFITS *Beware* 12"! Guess I shouldn't have gone bragging about that to my friend yesterday! Oof! Can't win 'em all I guess. See ya next month!



TAKE A SEAT

I've had this topic on the burner for a while, but am just now getting to it. And it's not going to be about sports, despite the genesis of the idea. A few months back, I was watching a Red Sox baseball game, and it was "Seats For Soldiers" day. The premise was that season ticket holders would donate their seats for that day's game to people who were serving or had served in the military. The press release announcing the event said it was *"intended to show the appreciation the Red Sox organization and its fans have for members of the United States Armed Forces."* It's something that the Sox have done for a few years. The press release went on to say the Sox were doing this in partnership with *"America Supports You, a nationwide program of the Department of Defense ... America Supports You was created in 2004 and helps showcase Americans' support for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families. They will assist the Red Sox with the distribution of all donated tickets."*

The woman who threw out the first pitch at that game, former Army Sgt. Michelle Saunders, was seriously wounded in Iraq in 2004 when helping get a fellow soldier (who ultimately died) to safety. That's according to the "Veterans Moving Forward" site. In the process, she broke her back and it took her nearly two years of multiple surgeries and physical therapy to recover from her injuries. She recuperated at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Walter Reed was in the news last year for having squalid conditions for many of its patients. In an extensive article in February '07, the *Washington Post* reported on neglect at the facility: *"While the hospital itself is a place of scrubbed-down order and daily miracles, with medical advances saving more soldiers than ever, the outpatients in the Other Walter Reed encounter a messy bureaucratic battlefield nearly as chaotic as the real battlefields they faced overseas."* While the average time spent at the hospital was around ten months, some had been there as long as two years; like Saunders. The story mentioned *"mouse droppings, belly-up cockroaches, stained carpets, cheap mattresses."* The neglect was also covered on *60 Minutes* on CBS, and Bush did eventually claim he'd do something about it. But veterans continue to have difficulties, and various reports claim the neglect has continued. And one of the end results is an increase in suicides by some veterans.

A recent issue of *The Nation* reported on how VA hospitals are making it tough for soldiers to receive warranted care. Dr. Frances Murphy, who worked at the VA and attempted to overhaul the system, spoke about the failings of the system at a conference of mental health organizations. She bemoaned the lack of access for appropriate care in VA hospitals near their homes, since many of those facilities don't provide help for mental health or substance abuse issues. It should be noted that shortly after making those remarks, Murphy was fired by the VA without any real explanation. But it doesn't take a genius to figure that out.

In addition, soldiers need to prove their injuries happened during their military service. The VA has insinuated that some soldiers may file fraudulent claims. A VA spokeswoman said that, since some enlistees were given a choice of jail or the military, they might be more likely to engage in fraud.

Speaking of obstacles, a *New York Times* op-ed piece written by Connecticut's Secretary of State Susan Bysiewisz, claimed that the secretary of Veterans Affairs, James Peake, issued a directive to ban non-partisan voter registration drives at federally financed facilities for veterans.

I would guess there's the fear that some of these people wouldn't vote Republican, and we can't have that, right? So it's better to effectively disenfranchise them.

Reading through the anecdotes, one wonders what "support the troops" means, exactly, outside of slapping a magnetic ribbon on your car. Support, eh? That doesn't seem to be the case when you talk about support from various politicians. Presidential candidate (as of this writing) John McCain, for instance: he opposed an expansion of the GI bill to provide full scholarships for soldiers who served at least three years, claiming they'd try to cash in after only one tour of duty. So? Isn't three years service enough to provide those kinds of benefits? Is it cynical of me to think that he needs more warm bodies to fight the wars he'll push the US into if elected?

Believe me, I'm no great supporter of the military and vehemently oppose this so-called "war on terror." But, as misguided as the motivation for some of these soldiers may have been to enlist, I still believe that, when they return from combat, they should receive help for physical and mental maladies. Unfortunately, while "support the troops" is a slogan, it's often an empty one. People slap a magnetic ribbon on their car and think that's enough. That's the reason I'm writing about this—to point out the hypocrisy of saying something and then not backing it up.

If the Sox want to take part in a program providing seats for soldiers, that's their prerogative. But while watching the game, I wondered if other folks who perform a valuable service to the country and their communities could be recognized in the same fashion. How about teachers, for instance? Why not "seats for teachers?" After all, they have a big responsibility in shaping young minds. Some might argue "mind control," but I have pleasant memories of my dedicated educators, and I'm sure they'd appreciate the recognition.

Unfortunately, education isn't always valued. In the withering economy, there have been cutbacks in various social services. Schools are being closed, teachers laid off, class sizes increasing. That's in addition to the "No Child Left Behind" nonsense, where the emphasis is focused on high-stakes testing. That means endless drilling and "teaching to the test," which often results in the neglect of other areas—arts, for instance. It becomes a tedious learning environment. While basic skills in reading, writing, math and science are important, there's more to a well-rounded education than that. The cutbacks have also resulted in after-school programs being canceled and kids having to pay extra to take part in athletics or even ride the bus to school. In Peabody, where I live, the mayor recently announced further cutbacks. One reason is he's bracing for the possibility of the state income tax being abolished.

That possibility comes courtesy of a referendum forwarded by anti-tax insaniacs (my rhyming is tight!) to abolish the state income tax. They had to collect signatures to get the question on the ballot and did it in a fairly creative way, at least when I was approached outside a grocery store. The guy collecting the signatures asked me if I'd sign the petition to place a referendum on the ballot that would decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana. Since I think the "drug war" (all these wars!) is a travesty, I gladly signed the petition. Then he asked me if I wanted to sign another petition to get the income tax on the ballot, and I refused to sign that one and walked away. One of the characters involved in this effort is Carla Howell, failed Libertarian gubernatorial candidate, whose motto is "Small government is beautiful." Another ardent supporter is Barbara Anderson, from Citizens for Limited Taxation. I mentioned her in a column about immigration a little over a year ago. She was the "brains" behind Proposition 2 1/2, which passed in Massachusetts in 1980 and places a cap on property taxes. If a city or town wants extra funds for local services (police, fire, schools, infrastructure repairs), they have to put an override on the ballot so people can vote for or against the extra tax.

I recently saw Anderson (unfortunately) on a local issues show on the Peabody public access station, and it was irksome how much one of the hosts, who is a Democrat, was fawning over her. She spent half her time bashing teachers unions, lambasting them for being one of the groups opposing the abolition of the income tax. In fact, she showed hostility towards any sort of union organization. As I wrote in the previous column, she has some sketchy viewpoints on immigration, particularly "illegal" immigration, and writes for some far-right blogs. In a 2006 column, she wrote, *"In my ideal world, only Americans would live in the United States of America."* She clarified that by saying she doesn't necessarily mean native-born Americans, but they should assimilate completely. She wrote, *"America is a melting pot, and its citizens speak English—perhaps with a heavy accent, but without complaint ... People who do not want to melt, who prefer to keep their culture and language of origin as their primary culture and language, should go back to the country of origin and stay there."*

Anyway, as I've written before, the city I live in isn't particularly enlightened. And I could see that anti-income tax initiative passing in Peabody. If that comes to be, I'm curious if the supporters of the referendum will connect the dots and wonder why the schools are going down the crapper, or why the fire truck didn't show up before their house burned down. There have already been cutbacks in the fire department in recent years. Maybe that's a simplistic analysis but, well, there are some simplistic people here.

The dire circumstances faced by various school systems hit home a few months ago. I was shopping at one of those large office supply chain stores. They've been doing promotions where they'll practically give away an item, just to get people into the stores. I imagine they have to try something since sales have been down (a nickel for a box of pencils or folders, a quarter for a stapler or notebook, etc.). I was waiting in line and the lady ahead of me had filled up her basket with those items. There was supposed to be a limit but the manager approved it. The reason, it turned out, was because the woman was a principal at a school in Chelsea, a mainly lower income city just outside of Boston. With the cutbacks, this was one way for her to provide supplies for her teachers and students. The manager wanted to help her out, and was bothered by the fact that she had to buy stuff on her own. That's not an uncommon occurrence. You'll hear or read about teachers buying supplies with their own money for their students since the school doesn't have the budget for it. Parents are being asked to pitch in more, as well. A story in the *Boston Globe* said, *"Along with stocking their children's backpacks, parents are increasingly helping teachers fill their cash-strapped classrooms with glue sticks, markers, hand sanitizers, toilet paper, and other basic materials once covered by school budgets."* Something else to consider is that parents in poorer areas may not have the finances to donate these items, so it creates more inequality between those communities and affluent ones.

So here are some areas where the government *should* have a role. Kids should be able to get an adequate education. People who put their asses on the line (for whatever reason) for these bogus military actions at least get the care they need. You wonder if it's possible to get through to the folks who cry crocodile tears over those veterans who come home with severe physical disabilities, who moan and complain about the inadequacy of the current education situation but aren't willing to pay for it.

In closing, you might have noticed that this column is shorter than in the past. That's because we've all got to stick to a certain word limit from now on. That's fine—less work for me! Seriously, though, while I'll still cover musical topics some of the time, you'll have to go to my Suburban Voice blog (www.subvox.blogpsot.com) to read a more extensive selection of music reviews. But I want that stuff to be available to readers who don't have internet access. I'd be happy to send you a text printout of the month's music blog(s)—not a zine, in other words. Just send me $2 to cover postage in the US, $4 outside the US.

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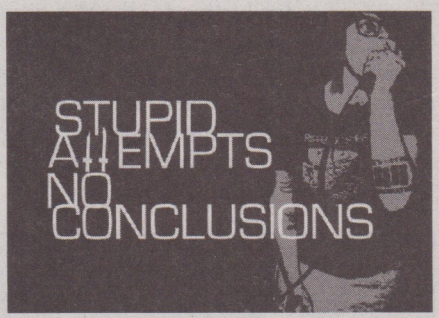

I feel like a wiener because I'm kind of bummed on apathy and irony right now. I really don't want to be one of those assholes who believes everything has be a straight-up anthem for direct and overall social change, and that anything portraying any sort of something negative or discouraged and frustrated encourages bad behavior. That shit reminds me too much of Fifteen whose entire catalogue was presented to me chronologically when I was on a recent weekend mini-tour that spanned two state lines in the Northwest, and a depressing death of summer (i.e., end of August, so much fucking rain). Like it seems the beginning material was the said straight-up anthems for direct social change. But then the overall theme in sloganistic refrain after sloganistic refrain eventually regresses to, "If it doesn't directly solve worldwide hunger, what's the point?" Which seems like the most apathetic sentiment ever.

It reminds me of the paradigm shift in the bands my olderish friends have started in the last eight years. Like in 2001, it was posi-points and going vegan and this year it's, "What's the fucking point?" Last week I was at a show of the crustish persuasion at my old house. It was in-between bands. I was looking at a painting of a pear my grandmother painted that I just never took. Then I noticed this dude Brett sitting on a couch listening to an Ipod. I don't blame him because I kind of I hate parties too. I was like, "Dude, nice party steez. I'm so into shit like that, ignoring everyone. I wish I could knit." He was like, "No, no, I'm just listening to this band I'm gonna drum in." I was all, "Gimme a listen." I catch the end of a song; the lyrics are "You can't change the world, so give the fuck up." I'm like, bleak. The demo he's listening to is being put out on a 7" and will probably sell well due to the mythology surrounding a few of the members. That sounds snide, like I'm resentful of their popularity. What I mean is, thanks to the magic of the internet and hardcore fans already paying attention to what these dudes are putting out, exposure won't be a problem and this probably won't end up in boxed stacks in the guitarist's closet, which one might expect from a vinyl demo.

I feel funny because I don't want to get all lecturey and be like, "Impressionable people will listen to you and this is what you are saying?" Because who am I—one of those idiots who believe that because something is being portrayed, it's being condoned? Like people who thought that Nabokov was a pervert because he wrote *Lolita*? But, I don't know. I guess I'm just worried about this tendency of people in hardcore/punk gaining an audience and then being like, "What's the point?"

But who am I to judge about idealism, anyway? I mean, I really like the older Fifteen stuff, like the "Kill all the owners of the mainstream media because of their crimes of violence against humanity" shit, because I believe in it, and sometimes it annoys me when I think that some of my peers like it because they think it's stupid and funny. But it's not like I'm wielding any weapons of direct action, and I'm known to frequent corporate newspapers for their lower-range difficulty-level crossword puzzles to plow through my downtime when I'm doing bike messenger work. And what am I doing in my uptime anyways? Probably directly lubricating the cogs of the CanWest Media conglomerate corporation via doing my assigned deliveries between offices. So if we are both in the back bench of the tour van knee-drumming and singing along and one of us thinks the line is stupid and one thinks it's pretty right-on, but neither of us are setting up snipers, what's the difference at all?

I guess the difference for me, in regards to watching a band in the "I can't believe you still believe those things we all believed in five years ago, you moron" vein, is entirely a personal preference of not wanting to feel attacked lyrically, which might mean I'm a baby that can't deal with confrontation. But I think it also has to do with feeling put-off by the "What's the point?" message. I don't want to harsh on anyone expressing their feelings, but if the point is lost on you, why are you there, yelling? But what else should one do in that situation but just stand there and yell?

The weekend mini-tour that doubled as the Fifteen tutorial was with our drummer's new other band that I was initially jealous of, and still kind of am. Embarrassing. I guess I'm envious of their genre's ability to captivate punks and alienate squares. Like it's fucking loud and makes your stomach hurt. It's all scissor-beats and feedback and repetitive skull-crushing guitar. Plus they are in the stage where the minds of all audiences are blown and they are consequently asked to play every show ever this summer. They are called Dichotomy—which is coincidentally the same name as the band I was starting with my gay goth best friend in grade eight that didn't really progress past him teaching me the guitar part for "Come As You Are," so I guess they can have the name. The night after, I ran into the vocalist Mikeala outside this Portuguese coffee bar I like. She was waiting for a bus. I was wasting away my day with caffeine and trying to figure out how I felt about apathy in hardcore lyrics.

"Hey, do you fake it or do you have lyrics?" Because it's the kind of band where she could totally fake it.

"No, I have lyrics."

"What do you sing about?"

"Oh … vivisection. Two songs about vivisection. There's one about manipulative people. And I have a song about how people let abuse in their past cause them

to be shitty."

"Like how lots of things in the scene that turn shitty are a result of hurt feelings due to cycles of abuse and bad communication and instead of fixing it, they just get frustrated and write everything and everyone off as worthless?"

"Yeah, kinda like that."

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I'm wintering in Barcelona this year. Local Spanish punks, get in touch.

"The Cold War is over," Condi Rice says. This may be true. She and her lame duck boss seem to be starting up a hot one instead.

Imagine Russian or Chinese military bases in Tijuana or Ciudad Juárez, across the Mexican border from El Paso. Add some more in Toronto and Vancouver. Now imagine that Russia managed to persuade Canada and Mexico to join it in some weird new Eastern bloc military alliance whose purpose was to "contain" the US, and then placed a battery of long-range missiles in one or both countries. How long would it take before we went to war?

Of course, you don't need an imagination. The US didn't tolerate Soviet missiles in Cuba, and is still trying to overthrow its government.

Given America's refusal to accept an unfriendly regime in its neighborhood (remember Grenada?), you'd think it would know enough to stay out of Russia's hair. You'd be wrong.

Driven by its twin original sins of greed and arrogance, the United States began nibbling at Russia's edges soon after the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Clinton Administration wooed oil-rich ex-Soviet states such as Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. It's as if Florida were to declare independence, and crawled into bed with Iran.

Efforts to de-Russify the old Soviet sphere of influence accelerated under Bush, who used 9/11 and the "war on terror" as a pretext to establish permanent military bases in the Central Asian republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Bush's CIA even funded a coup d'état in Kyrgyzstan, which overthrew Central Asia's only democratically elected president.

Central Asia, under Russia's sphere of influence for more than 150 years, began laying host to CIA "black sites" and other U.S. torture facilities.

The US invited ex-Soviet bloc states—the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, the Baltic states—to join NATO, the Cold War-era anti-Russian military alliance. Recently, it even encouraged the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Georgia to apply for membership, emboldening Georgia in its recent conflict with Russia.

Now the Bush Administration has convinced Poland to base ten RIM-161 Standard Interceptor Missiles (SM-3) along Russia's western border.

Republics that were once part of or fell under the influence of the Soviet Union are sovereign states. They are legally and morally permitted to form alliances with any other nation they choose, including the US. Still, you have to wonder: Don't these guys own a map? Doesn't it make more sense to suck up to the superpower next door than the one an ocean away?

From our perspective: Why would the US think provoking Russia by encroaching on its traditional sphere of influence is a good idea?

For Russia, using newfound oil wealth to rebuild its military, the Polish-American missile deal is the line in the sand. Annual defense budget increases of twenty percent or more, which should bring at least half of its hardware up to modern standards by 2015, have transformed the dying dog of Yeltsin-era "shock economics" back into a growling bear.

"Poland, by deploying [U.S. missiles] is exposing itself to a [nuclear] strike—100 percent," says top Russian general Anatoly Nogovitsyn. The Russian government stood by his threat.

The US claims the Russians have nothing to fear. "It [the missile system] is not aimed in any way at Russia," says Condi. Indeed, interceptor missiles are designed to shoot down other missiles, not launch attacks. But the Russians don't want to see their ability to strike first—a right also reserved by the US—degraded by an anti-missile system. They also worry about the slippery slope: What new weapons will the US place in Eastern Europe later on?

Russia's concerns are no different than ours would be if they were the ones arming Canada against us. But Condi's reassurances are too cute by half.

Shortly before signing the missile deal with Poland, she commented: "This will help us to deal with the new threats of the 21st century, of long-range missile threats from countries like Iran or from North Korea." Sounds reasonable—except for geography.

Nearly 2,000 miles separate Iran and Poland. North Korea is nearly 5,000 miles away from Poland. But Iran's longest-range missile, the Shahab-3, can only go 1,200 miles—about the same as North Korea's equivalent. When you factor in the fact that America's Poland-based SM-3s only travel about 300 miles, it is mathematically impossible for them to intercept anything launched by Iran or North Korea.

The US is occupying two of the largest nations bordering Iran—Afghanistan and Iraq. Wouldn't building a missile shield there make a zillion times more sense? As for North Korea, well, we have a base in Okinawa, not to mention 25,000 troops in South Korea.

Are the Bushies trying to create a "national emergency" pretext for canceling the presidential election? Are they crazy Christians lusting for the end times? Or are they just nuts? No one knows their motives. But it's hard to escape the conclusion that, after lying us into two losing wars, Cheney & Co. are using their closing months to try to provoke the mother of them all.

I can't believe it's been over eight years.

Eight years since a good friend of mine died.

In a way, I'm glad he didn't get to see 9/11 and a lot of other bullshit. But I miss him deeply.

Here's a short piece about "sitting Shiva:" something us Jews do when someone we love dies.

And this guy was way loved.

"My mom would rather call it 'receiving guests' than 'sitting Shiva,' explains

Mickey Leigh, brother of Joey Ramone, and son of Charlotte Lesher, as he and I, My Future Ex-Wife and Evan stand on his mom's terrace in Queens, watching the sun set over the Manhattan skyline.

"Uh huh," I say as Mickey passes me the joint he and My Future Ex-Wife are busy toking away on. I sniff the thing, and then give it to My Future Ex-Wife. Pot makes me crazy. And crazy wasn't what I needed. I was already *insane* since I'd heard the news on Sunday that Joey, aka Jeff Hyman, had passed away from cancer.

About an hour earlier, My Future Ex-Wife and I piled into Evan's father's car to make our second journey out to visit Mickey and his mom at her apartment. The first time we went, Evan, my ex-bass player in Furious George, reminds me was in 1995. We were doing a segment for my cable television show, *Destroy TV*, which still airs every Friday night/Saturday morning at 3:30 a.m.

"It was the day of Mickey Mantle's funeral," he tells My Future Ex-Wife and I, as we make our way over the Williamsburg Bridge in his father's car.

"Another great New Yorker," I tell him, and we all sigh.

"So where's your grandfather's car?" I ask Evan, wondering what happened to his last car. The one that took Furious George on so many tours.

"Oh, I rear ended some French bastard last week," Evan explains, "and there was no damage to The Frog's car, but I fucked up mine $3,500 worth."

We laugh, and talk a bit about Evan's new career as a SAG extra. He tells us that lately he's been getting cast as a crackhead, a homeless father, and dead junkie.

"When I did the junkie role," he says, "they told me I didn't even need make-up."

We talk some more about how I agreed to let the United States Army use Furious George songs for free in their training films. We talk about everything except Joey. None of us want to think of what's really going on. That we're going to pay our respects to his mom and brother. That we'd never see him again.

We arrive at Charlotte's place and find a great parking spot. As we make our way into the building, Evan comments that he's looking forward to the food. I know My Future Ex-Wife was as well, as she hadn't eaten in hours.

As we all rode the elevator up to the their floor, Evan was the first to say it.

"All of a sudden I feel really creepy".

He had said what we all were feeling. That this was it. We were about to go into the home of a grieving family. Of a mother who had just lost her son. A brother who had just lost a brother. Fucking Joey Ramone.

We got to the correct floor, found the apartment, knocked on the door, and heard Mickey yell, "Come in!"

As we entered, the first thing we saw was this great spread of food. I mean, fucking beautiful. Roast beef. Turkey. Bagels. Meatballs. Pasta. Coleslaw. Potato salad. The works.

The next thing we saw was Mickey, filling up his plate with all the food. After a few quick hellos and hugs, Mickey begged us to dig in.

I asked him who all the people in his mom's apartment were, as I didn't recognize any of them except for his mom, his wife, him, and some pussy rock critic.

"These," said Mickey, as he pointed to the crowd, "are people who are hungry."

We all laughed and Evan and My Future Ex-Wife dug in.

I made my way around the apartment checking everything out. There was a nice mix of children and grown-ups. All who looked like close family or friends. It was really nice, and the room had a very peaceful vibe.

Set upon a table in the middle of the living room, were lots of pictures of Joey and Mickey and their mom. When they were kids, and when they were adults. It was very sweet, and I felt my throat lock up as I clutched the Furious George album in my hands that I had brought for Joey's mom. It had Joey singing on it, and since I knew that she collected *everything* her sons ever did, I wanted her to have our album as well.

A few minutes later I found myself in Mickey's mom's bedroom, alone with him, My Future Ex-Wife, and Evan. My Future Ex-Wife and Evan were eating. And I was jealous.

"Didja ever see this?" asked Mickey, as he showed me a picture of him and Joey from an old issue of *New Musical Express.*

I told him I had, and that I actually still have that newspaper. It is amazing to see how he and his brother looked so much alike.

We talked some more about Joey, or Jeff, as his family calls him, and about his last moments on Earth. Mickey tells us the story of how he played a U2 song for Jeff as he drifted away forever.

"He was such a professional," said Arlene, Mickey's wife, as she walked into the room, "He even died on cue."

We all laugh. Laugh away the tears that we all feel welling up in our eyes.

"George," says Mickey, as he watches My Future Ex-Wife and Evan finish their bagel sandwiches, "go get something to eat. What's wrong with you?"

I tell him I will, as soon as I give my album to his mom.

Mickey pushes me out the door, and toward her. As I get closer to her, my heart beats faster and faster. What do you say to your idol's mom? The idols being both Jeff and Mitchell (Mickey's real name).

But, as it turns out, I didn't have to say anything.

"George," said Charlotte, "It's so nice to see you again! Both my sons speak so highly of you. Have you had anything to eat yet?"

I give her the album, hardly able to cough out any words, and she tells me that her and Mickey are thinking of writing a book together, called *I Remember You*, about Jeff. Joey. Whatever. I get goose bumps.

We talk a bit more, and I was amazed at how *great* she looked. I mean, even My Future Ex-Wife commented on how strong and beautiful she looked.

"George," Charlotte says, snapping me out of my thoughts, "Eat!"

So I do.

Roast beef. Turkey. Meatballs. Lots of coleslaw. Pasta. And even a piece of a bagel. And it was fucking delicious.

Some time later, Mickey and Arlene took Evan, My Future Ex-Wife and I out on to the terrace to smoke some pot. As the joint was passed around, we watched the sun set over the city as we heard Ramones music playing. We turned around to look inside and saw that VH1 was airing a Ramones special. We all looked at each other and smiled.

We talked a bit more about Joey, remembering the good times of his life.

As the sun disappeared somewhere behind The World Trade Center and The Empire State Building, Mickey spoke.

"Ya know," he said, "My brother, Jeff Hyman has left us, but Joey Ramone will be with us forever."

Punk Rock. And Shalom.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. Favorite CDs this month include The Rydells *Rock n Roll Is The Answer,* with great tunes like "Toledo" and

"Cowabunga Kicks" and "Three Bullets." Best Ramones album since The Riverdales *Phase Three*! Oh, and their cover of "Warthog" is scary! Also cool is Potatoe Famine's *Old, Young & Pissed* CD. Go see these guys when they are on tour. And sing along with "Killer In The White House" and "Finnegan's Wake," just for me! The Rich White Males single *We Ain't No Musicians* proves the exact opposite point. Good *real* punk rock stuff here. Teenage Jesus And The Jerks have a reissue of old stuff out on some label, called *Shut Up And Bleed* and it's as real as punk gets. Great to hear this stuff again!!! The Meatmen, led by Tesco Vee, have a new DVD out called *The Devil's In The Details, Volume 1*, and it's the funniest and rockingest thing I've seen in over a decade. This DVD has it all: naked people, punk rockers, Abba, and Satan. A must for all Meatmen fans and those of Tesco Vee, The Dutch Hercules and wonderboy punk who defined what *is funny* in hardcore!!! Fucking great!!! Buy this!!!

2. Checking out some cool video game titles I'll let you know about next month; but just to let you know, these games are punk rock! Made by DIY scenesters who have found a new outlet for their artistic rage! Right on!! It's funny how many people I know who do video games now who still play punk rock!!!

3. *Criminal Class Review* "Volume 1, Number 1" is out now and is an awesome little book. Great poems, greater stories, and all around punk rock fun! With some real serious thought provoking shit thrown in. It's great to see punk rockers express themselves through writing as well! It's all about the emotions, baby! And baring your soul! Even if it's about your dying parents or shooting bad guys. Happy Halloween to you all and you all rock my world!

As I write this in early September, the Republican Party is having its convention across the river in St. Paul, Minnesota. The party of warmongering plutocrats chose to have its convention in the state of Hubert Humphrey, Paul Wellstone and Eugene McCarthy to try to push this traditionally liberal state more to the right. For months a number of different activist groups have been planning demonstrations, protests and civil disobedience of various types. However, the night before the convention got under way, police and FBI raided a number of homes in the Twin Cities and rounded up several protest organizers. They confiscated computers, maps, and items ranging from weapons to household products to bolster their case that a dangerous anarchist conspiracy was afoot.

The day the convention opened there was a large protest with about 10,000 protesters surrounded by half that many cops in riot gear. Some of the protesters got unruly—smashing up police cars and the like—and others attempted to perform acts of civil disobedience such as blocking traffic into the convention center. Hundreds of these protesters were Maced, clubbed and arrested. Police called in National Guard troops to fire rubber bullets and tear gas on a crowd that refused to disperse. Even crusading journalist Amy Goodman of the *Democracy Now!* radio show was arrested.

As I write this, the convention is still under way. Some 300 have already been arrested—many charged with ominous crimes unheard of here in the upper Midwest since the Madison, Wisconsin radical scene of the late '60s or Chicago in 1968. Indeed, I don't think there has been anything like tear gas or rubber bullets fired on crowds in this state since the 1937 Teamsters strike.

Beyond being simply outrageous instances of extralegal activity and police brutality, I think we have to put these kinds of actions into a larger context.

In 1986, I was briefly a student at the Prince Georges County Community College. This college, like many of its ilk, had a law enforcement program, training small-minded thugs to be PG County Police officers. If you've ever lived in or near PG County, you know these are some of the worst cops on the East Coast. Regardless, in the law enforcement section of the library was a really excellent collection of literature about the '60s radical movement, the civil rights movement, the riots and urban unrest of the '60s and early '70s, and the antiwar movement; as well as manuals telling police which color smoke grenades or tear gas to use on different ethnic groups. As a young radical who missed the '60s by a generation but grew up very much in it's shadow, I read this material with great interest—from government reports and police manuals to Yippie, Black Panther and SDS newspapers.

Many historians of the early '70s cite what came to be called the "freeze out." This was the point at which the establishment had marshaled the resources of law enforcement, the courts, the media, and military forces to thwart attempts at massive protest in the streets. The COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) had managed to infiltrate and sow discord into many groups. Still countless others spent years tied up in legal battles, changing the focus of their organizations from activism to legal defense; and many more were simply locked up, killed, or intimidated into going underground. The establishment sent a loud and clear message that taking a stand might mean real jail time—or worse—getting gunned down like Fred Hampton.

By most accounts, the failure of the mass peace protests of the '60s and the hardening of repression by the establishment led the most hardcore activists to stage increasingly militant protests (i.e., the 1969 "Day of Rage" in Chicago). The more militant protests were met with overwhelming force from the police, courts and military, who utilized methods more fit for Stalinist Russia or Pinochet's Chile. This stood in stark contrast to the high point of mass protest at the 1968 Chicago Democratic convention, where the response of the establishment was brutal, yet clumsy and out of control (the textbook "police riot"). The protest movement of the '60s met its waterloo at the May Day protests of 1971, where Washington DC was placed under martial law and tens of thousands of police and US army troops were deployed against the weathermen and other protesters, leading to the mass arrest of some 7,000 protesters. After this point the "freeze out" was pretty complete. Mass protests ended, and the hippies turned mostly to hedonism or wacky cults and health food.

Over the last century, the only change in American society has come through force on the establishment by outside social movements. The vote for women's rights, the eight-hour day, civil rights, gay rights etc., were all concessions won from the status quo by organized activists who took to the streets and demanded change. These reforms are frequently viewed as

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concessions handed out by the powers that be to inhibit unrest, and mobilizing more people to question the underlying structure of American society (which places a narrow elite in control of the government and its resources). Indeed, the one instance of massive change from "inside the system" was during the New Deal, which was more or less forced on the Roosevelt administration by an increasingly agitated working class who had elected him with a mandate to fix the rot in Washington and end the Depression. The story of the last 60 years seems to be the attempt of the elite to dismantle the New Deal and bring back the gilded age of the Robber Barons.

There hasn't been much social unrest since the early years of the Reagan administration. The Clinton years, banal as they seemed at the time, was an era of relative calm. Bush seemed a rather lame duck until 9-11. But it seems since 9-11, the media, the government and society at large have adopted a vicious, no compromise stance against any form of dissent. The tactics used against anti-war protesters in St. Paul and elsewhere are reminiscent of the tactics that crushed the '70s anti-war movement and resulted in the "freeze out" that quashed the social movements of that era. The message is clear: step at all out of line and you'll be tear gassed, thrown in jail, and faced with a major legal battle. This kind of intimidation is less than subtle, as peaceful protesters must follow a permitted route flanked by legions of baton wielding riot cops just to exercise their constitutional rights of free speech and assembly.

I am proof that the intimidation is successful, because I stayed home this weekend rather than risk arrest. Pushing 40, with a business to run and bills to pay, I didn't want to risk spending a weekend in jail and running up a big legal bill to make a statement against the war and the radical right. I did a great deal of protesting in the '80s and feel it's best left to those with less to lose. However, it's a solid reminder of the reason why many at this point in history stay home when they feel like they should be doing more to push social change. Pushing for social change nowadays is meant to be dangerous business. The Patriot act, wiretapping, round ups of dissidents, tear gas and rubber bullets are serious business, aimed at keeping everyone home and afraid to exercise their rights. Meanwhile, we have a corporate media, which now reports "news" consisting mostly of salacious details about the lives of celebrities and infomercials about consumer products. This media pains itself to paint the protesters as extremists, terrorists or mental cases instead of citizens exercising their rights.

The erosion of civil liberties and the marginalization of even the most moderate dissent paint a bleak picture of the future. The violence on the streets of St. Paul brings to mind the "rifle butts and truncheons" of Discharge's "State Control." But these days I increasingly find myself reminded of NOTA's "Taking Away Your Rights." Finally, I will quote the Proletariat's "Decide on Change" — *"Change is met, with resistance, but the change can be the difference. Decide, decide on change."*

So Many Ways to Sleep Badly (an excerpt)

Okay, so I'm sitting here wondering what to write about … what to write about this month, and I realize oh, my new novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly* is finally out, at long last!!! And I'm about to go on a two-month tour, so I should post an excerpt from the new novel, right? And, if you want to see me in person, check out my tour list via my website (www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com). So far, I'm going to San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Bellingham, Chicago, Toronto, Montréal, Boston, New York, Washington DC, and Baltimore, and also definitely planning more Bay Area readings plus Santa Cruz and Los Angeles, with more to come. Here's the excerpt:

Diamond Bracelets

You know those tricks who've had 50 years of practice sucking cock—and I do mean 50 years—and still it's sandpaper city. What's up with that? This straight-boy on the street says you remind me of Alice In Wonderland, how sweet! Though I think my father molested me during that movie. Alice just kept falling and falling.

Three a.m. and of course I'm wired—remember the early nineties? Tweakin' and tweezin', tweakin' and tweazin'. Every time a trick hangs up on me, I gain a renewed faith in humanity—someone really cares! Looking worse in the mirror, do you believe in insurance? Aaron says there's an online community called pneumothorax.com—his collapsed lung finally has a home! Donna Karan Donna Karan Donna Karan.

Fighter jets and fire engines, oh it's my mother's birthday! She leaves a message. Did she really say I love you? More sirens. I'm so dehydrated and Congress authorizes President Bush to wage war against Iraq while fighter jets just keep flying over and over. Everyone in the street stops to stare. But where are all those jets going?

The US government is already talking about post-war occupation of Iraq, and the tendons in my feet and hands are burning. The sky is still so loud—is that a bomb? So much pain in my head, everybody's allergic to war. But wait—there's good news: the stock market is up 7.8 percent in two days and you've been invited to celebrate Disney's 100th anniversary with a four day, three night vacation stay in Orlando, Florida near world famous Walt Disney World. Plus, you'll enjoy three days/two nights on the white sand beaches of Daytona—all for $99 per person. The confirmation for your invitation is Magical 752.

News brief: someone on the phone sex line used the word tender! Apparently the roaches enjoy the base of my electric toothbrush, a safe warm home for the fringe. I hate it when I get so exhausted that I can't function, and then I get depressed—wait, that happens every day! My trick loves this weather—we have this weather every night. If I stayed in bed for two months, who would feed me?

This trick says wasn't it fun to watch the Blue Angels? A taxi driver tells me air shows are America's number one pastime. The toast at 7 a.m. is so dry, and I can feel my depression creeping up on me—HELP! There's a good luck penny in the hallway—okay, everything's going to be fine. Sick, sick, sick, sick—kick!

My next trick has such pale skin, reminds me of when I was afraid of the sun too—was I that pale? My favorite moment is when I tell him his hair is soft, he says thanks, I work on it. Felix's mixing takes me out of depression, through nostalgia and into the border area. Like I

could cry, or fly. Which do I prefer—using a dildo and fucking up my hand, or using my dick and inflaming my jock itch? The bride is arriving soon, and I must please her. Over the phone, he says: I just got in from Paris and I feel like shit, are you up for fucking? I just got in from Paris and I feel like shit, are you up for fucking? I just got in from Paris and I feel like shit, are you up for fucking?

As soon as the trick walks in, I know I'm not going to be able to fuck him. He's working the receding hairline with gooey grey ponytail and blue contacts to contrast his leather tanning salon skin, Fila jumpsuit and big silver rings on all his fingers, round tortoise shell eyeglasses. This girl is married, with kids—and now she needs tea, then a shower. But God save the queen, he comes while I'm jerking him off. Then the best part is when he tells me about his town, he says the racial composition is twenty-five different shades of white, and the architecture is like Taco Bell-designed heaven.

In the depressed area of the trick's town, the houses go for $500,000, but to really fit in you need to own not just a pool, but an indoor pool, a North-South tennis court and a two-story garage for the $500,000 RV. It's not just a gated community—they've got armed guards on patrol. Everywhere there are blue-haired ladies in designer jeans wearing enough diamond bracelets to get a hernia.

Did I mention the trick's umbilical hernia, a bubble of mushy skin oozing out of his belly button like a force field? Rich people are so glamorous. The next trick hands me a glass of tap water—the bitch doesn't know if she can get out of the bank, but her apartment must be worth three million, and the doorman has to unlock the elevator. This is just the San Francisco apartment.

Dreams of new houseplants, changing what it says on the computer screen, and stress, stress, stress! Did I mention Ralowe's show? We performed together at this hipster nightmare, he finished the night with layers of noise: drums that were just another instrument on top of the machines and then Ralowe shaking his body and shouting rap vocals over the commotion. It was delicious. Everyone left.

Today the sun is filtering through the clouds, and I'm rooting for the clouds. Shit—here comes the sun—and is it really 4 p.m.? All the little memories loading me down—like I'm eating tom kha soup with Rue, and Jeremy introduced me to that soup. Buying plants together, going to visit the sea lions, and I can't bring myself to get rid of the stuffed animals even though they just make me think of petting Jeremy, sweet Jeremy. I want to call him and tell him I miss him, but I don't want to call him.

I know it's dangerous to get all teary-eyed about the time when my white boyfriend introduced me to a Thai specialty, but that's how nostalgia works—nostalgia is dangerous. Kayti remembers when she used to say she was Persian, so people wouldn't know that she was Latina—people thought it was more glamorous to be from Persia; we both had a lot of Persian friends. Kayti says they were really from Iran, right?

Dreams that they've changed my front door, can I get out? I'm thinking about how many pairs of eyes we look into each day—there's this guy on the bus with beautiful grey eyes, I can't stop looking. I catch another eye in the back, just one—a blond guy. The bus arrives. At home, I jerk off so I don't have to think about hooking up.

I'm telling Justin and Owen about Jeremy, and then all of the sudden ten people show up at their house, I guess it's 2 a.m. Owen says, you switch so easily into social mode. I don't know what mode I'm in, suddenly I've got so much energy, and Xylor says I saw you earlier and I was telling somebody about your outfit—it was the most preposterous combination of colors I've ever seen, I even remembered the red socks, though it didn't make sense. The person I was talking to said yeah, Mattilda likes red socks.

Ralowe starts free-styling and I'm dancing on top of the ottoman: it's all about the hands and body twisting and tensing, breathe in, out. Almost falling off and recovering. I have so much energy, it's crazy—and too late, really. Xylor says I wonder why. I say no, that's not why. She looks at my eyes. Well, maybe you're just a night person.

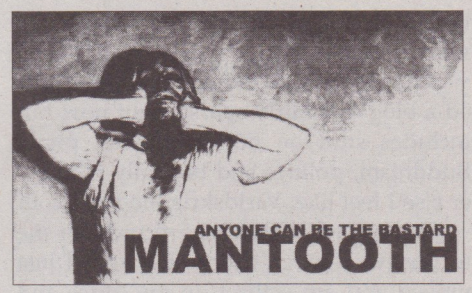
I'm so glad everyone goes outside to smoke, Billeil even checks to make sure. Ralowe and I leave, I'm looking at the doors in front of the apartment. The apartment's so long and thin—was it made for immigrant workers or did they subdivide it? Then I'm looking into the funeral home, and wait—the doorframe next door is gorgeous and Ralowe says he's exhausted. I'm getting exhausted too.

Just as I'm hailing a taxi, the bus comes. Ralowe tries to get on the back and the bus driver calls him out—get off the bus, he says. Ralowe gets off, I'm waving him to the front and the bus driver speeds away. This woman says just because they're black, they think they can get on for free. The bus driver, who's black, says shut your mouth already. The woman looks at me, she says your daddy raped you and that's why you're a faggot. I say my daddy raped me, but that's not why I'm a faggot. She says your daddy raped you and that's why you're a faggot. I say your problem is that you tasted shit, and then you just kept eating it. She gets off the bus.

I call Ralowe on his cell phone: Honey, you should have asked me for a dollar. Ralowe says I'm gonna walk home—all the way to North Beach? He says: I'm gonna work on this song. I say, well I'll call you when I get home, 'cause I've got a story for you. He says don't call me because I don't have any minutes, I'll see you tomorrow. I say I might not get up in time. He says then I'll see you Tuesday.

We're all crazy, holding it together with such fine threads. I'm waiting for the 90 at Van Ness and Mission, and I'm getting all emotional—it's not okay for a bus driver to make you walk home because you don't have enough money for the fare—and does the 90 ever come? Finally it pulls up. I can't believe it, and just as I get on the bus there's a ten-foot high ad for Tommy Hillfiger. The whole ad is this guy's abs and the stars-and-stripes. It's sickening, and suddenly I'm horny in that desperate way.

My new novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*, is out early!!! I'll be touring October through December, so maybe we can meet up (check my homepage for dates, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com). And, the expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* is also finally available. You can check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I'm the reviews editor at the brilliant new feminist magazine *Make/shift*, where I also have a column, but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via my homepage, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



Walking blindly through yards I'd been through a million times before in the daylight, stumbling over rocks and stumps I knew were there, I found myself facing that *thing* my restless nights fighting insomnia never delivered. That *weird secret thing* I knew happened out there in my neighborhood's dead of night. In the clearing stood an elderly couple hand-in-hand, completely naked. They stared off into the overgrown pasture of the abandoned Kahne farm, ankle deep in the muddy banks of the small creek that ran behind all of our houses. What I thought were liver spots turned out to be deep gashes arranged without a pattern all over their bodies, leaking their ancient blood into the cold stream.

It was the first time I'd ever seen so much exposed flesh outside of my own and Jesus on the cross. But I was only ten years old so these all lacked the sexual and religious baggage you'd want and expect years later, looking back. Back then these were all just *things* that were *there*. Even though I want to say I was smarter than that, more complicated than that, these two figures that were apparently so violently birthed out of the thorny brush evoked no shock other than the surprise akin to finding your car keys in a place you knew you hadn't left them.

This isn't to say I was dumb or even *base*. I knew when something was out of the ordinary, perhaps even a little dangerous. I didn't recognize these people and that automatically made me suspicious. No one ever came down our street that didn't live there, let alone into our backyards, completely naked and bloody. So I crouched in the bushes staring at these figures staring back at something in the field, maybe waiting for something, not about to do anything.

For weeks I'd been sneaking out through our bathroom window (no one would think twice about someone getting up to go to the bathroom) hoping I'd run into those things you knew happened when everyone was asleep. I found nothing but dog shit on my shoes and a condom I thought was a snakeskin. I sometimes would climb a tree and wait, hoping that whatever lurked our streets would finally reveal itself when it thought I wasn't looking. I stopped this when I fell asleep up in one, draped over a tree limb like a piece of laundry, only to be awakened by the sound of my father's Suburban and its lack of muffler going to work.

That night was just like the rest in that I had no routine. I tried to go a different way every night so that my nightly walks wouldn't become as boring and predictable as my insomnia. I don't remember the moon, although I wish I did so I could use it as some sort of literary device to lull you, dear reader, into some sense of *being there*. I could paint you a pretty picture wherein the moonlight shown like a spotlight on two nude octogenarians bleeding profusely into the night. Unfortunately, the only light came from the nuclear power plant's cooling towers off in the distance, but even that landed only slightly on their wrinkled bodies.

I was hidden about fifteen feet from where they stood, at about 5 o'clock their time. I lay down and watched them, thought about asking if they needed help, perhaps going back to the house to get them something to stop the bleeding. The woman was short and plump with stringy long hair that was thinning towards the top of her head. The wrinkled skin from her shoulders and back formed a pale V that flowed in lumps into her flat butt. Her short legs bowed inwards at the knees so much that it looked as if the whole structure could collapse at any moment. Her cuts matched her partner's in that they were numerous and fresh, not missing from any part that I could see.

He was much taller and thinner, almost emaciated. Unlike her, I could see his ribcage moving with every strained breath, the skin stretching like burlap wrapped around a frame of dried branches. He held her hand lightly but intently, her arm rested at her side as if making no effort to reciprocate. If they had indeed pulled themselves out of the field, it seemed as though he had dragged her out against her will. And so upon their arrival at the other side of the creek, on its soft muddy shore, he was exhausted from pulling and pleading, trying to catch his breath, while they both stared at where they could never go back, like how you'd stare of the wreckage of a home you never but should have left long ago.

Heretofore I have been fairly silent on the upcoming election we have here in the beautiful US of A. Like any election within our capitalist framework, it won't fundamentally make changes on the grand scale of things. A lot of issues are involved this time around, which is a little different, including sex and race and those ideas in American consciousness.

To be clear, I am not a Democrat. I don't know if I can bring myself to vote for a major party ever again. I supported the Green Party over the last several elections, voted for Socialist third parties at other times, and occasionally supported Democrats in local elections. I have trouble on a national scale with the Dems, especially with the way they kowtowed to the Republicans in the run up to the Iraq war; I just don't know how to reconcile that in my head. When the chips are down and our freedoms, life, and death of other nations are in question, no significant part of either major party is going to stand up for what is right—they will just act out of fear and political convenience. This goes for the wiretapping, torture, war, and every other issue we've seen over the last several years that should be impeachable, criminal offenses.

McCain would be essentially the same as Bush, although he doesn't seem to have the fire in the belly about social conservatism that Bush does—but he will pander to those who do all the same. I do worry about people who have been scarred by war being in such high positions—not because I don't have sympathy for their shitty experience, but because anybody having been in a POW camp is going to be pissed off and traumatized. Vets are victims of our fucked up capitalist system the same as many other groups of people. But when your mentality coming out of it is based on militarism and aggression, it really doesn't bode well. I have met a few vets who came out of their experience with a pro-aggressive, militaristic type mentality; but it generally strikes me as malingering and posturing, trying to justify in their own minds that

the suffering they have experienced is somehow normal or OK. But most vets I've met have known (and that includes those who have been in POW camps) that war and militarism are wrong, and that Vietnam, Iraq, and most other US military ventures were colossal mistakes.

That McCain chose Palin—a young woman and mother of several kids—strikes me as politically pretty clever. I will give him that for sure. In terms of garnering votes, this may have been the smartest move he's made. Sure, it's good to have more women involved in politics, and the US is dreadfully behind in that sense compared with other nations—even those whose treatment of women we frequently criticize (India and Iran have many times more women representatives than we do). Obviously Palin is super conservative, so that doesn't help, but it also seems like women often reach higher levels as right wingers first—at least in western countries. Who could forget Margaret Thatcher? Yikes!

Obama is interesting as a person and a cultural phenomenon, even if by and large he will not change this inherently messed up capitalist structure. Some of the dialogue that his candidacy and ascendancy has created is fascinating. Make no mistake about it, just because he's black does not mean that he won't support the structure of the status quo—he has made it clear that in fact he will. I actually didn't think we would have a serious black candidate for the presidency for quite a while—that is just the way I thought things were in this country. I didn't think white people would accept a black person in the highest leadership position in government, and the election hasn't happened yet so they may not. For a black candidate to have any chance of getting white people to vote for them in this country, they have to be (especially as a presidential candidate) non-threatening. For instance, I absolutely agreed with probably 90 percent of what Al Sharpton said in his campaign, and his message was consistently honest, realistic and accurate, and pulled no punches. He tore through the Newspeak of the entire campaign. I watched some of the debates just to see him lambast the whole process. In that sense it's pretty easy to see why Reverend Al Sharpton had so little support from white Americans. He's threatening—too honest and critical I guess. But when a white person does that they are praised as a being a "Washington Outsider," an "agent of change" or what have you. What is a little different about Obama is he has found a way to be palatable to a large section of (white) liberals who are certainly far from immune to racism. I think Obama is a pretty savvy politician, and that is how he managed to succeed in getting the nomination. He is also personally charismatic, which is probably more important in our age of mass media. Clinton is so unlikable I'm amazed she ever stood a chance.

The vociferousness of Hilary supporters and the anger some so-called "liberals" have towards Obama has been very intriguing. It's of course in large part thinly veiled racism, but also I think involves white, single issue "feminists" who basically think their issue is the only issue and don't see racism and sexism as part of the larger struggle. I've had enough of these suburban soccer moms crying out about how wrong Obama is. Politically he really isn't that different than Clinton, so it's pretty provocative when people are so furious about it. What is the real reason, hmm? The reason the Republicans keep winning is how divided and incoherent the left is in this country, and I wouldn't be too shocked if McCain won because of this.

I read an article online recently that really piqued my interest. Basically what it said was if Obama becomes president, racism is going to be worse in this country. Mind you this was a progressive/radical source, a person of color commenting on the situation. What he was saying is that it will allow white Americans to rebuff any suggestion that this country is racist (even more than they already do) by saying, "Oh, we have a black president, we aren't racist anymore." All the while the same prejudices and system that keeps whites in a position of privilege over people of color the world over remains in place—just over a veneer of inclusion. Beneath the mask it festers all the same—and gets worse because now we can deny our racism and prejudice all the more. This is my concern too. I think for the current generation, and in the short term, it won't do anything, or may even make racism more complex in this country. But it may help for kids to grow up seeing a black man in a position of power, with a black family in the white house; maybe down the road that will help us in some way, if only symbolically. I doubt it will help politically or economically, but it may very well have positive social implications. Sometimes you have to take change where you can get it.

So lastly I would like to say I have started a blog! It's fairly sparse right now but includes stuff on horror movies, punk, Buddhism, politics and basically whatever else I feel like. Varldskrig.blogspot.com

To those who have sent records for me to review, I haven't forgotten you; I just moved and am setting up my office and will get to them next month. Cheers!

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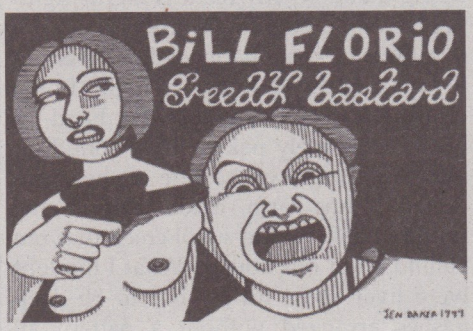


Matthew Odietus was the guitarist for the band the Candy Snatchers He passed away a couple of months ago. I sort of feel a little weird writing about someone I know who has died, and I can't say I was a good friend of Matt or anything like that. I can say I genuinely liked him, and I can't think of many hard drug users I can say that about at all. But I do think Matt and the Candy Snatchers have helped shape a part of my general thinking about music, and to some extent about life and death itself. I know! This sounds very weird.

Let me go on. Some folks think that to influence others you have to come up with ideas that no one has ever thought about, or accomplish things that no one has ever accomplished before. These folks are thinking very big here—sort of like that person who jumps from job to job and significant other to insignificant other, always searching for something more—whatever the heck that is. There are other people who see everyone as having a potential great value to the world. I won't knock either of these outlooks: without them a lot of folks would just sit around and do nothing and feel some sort of dread that life is meaningless.

Both of these somewhat crazed and very idealistic corners of humanity can be very influential, but I see another. I believe you can set an example not so much by your achievement or your potential, but

by sheer honesty. Matt was a very honest person and when you talked to him, you knew he was genuine because 1) He had no shame whatsoever, and 2) He definitely said whatever was on his mind at all times. Hey, maybe it was the drugs that played some part in this, but c'mon now—drugs usually makes people a lot of things, but honest isn't usually one of them. I'll have to believe this was his nature from the very start and that the life he led sprung from that.

Alright, let's cut the shit and get to some stories.

I first saw the Candy Snatchers with the Chimpanzees, my friend Squeaky Dave's band. They were already his favorite band, and Dave knew Larry May from years back, probably before Dave started trading thrash mixes with the world. I'd seen a lot of odd sort of energetic bands before, but not quite like them. They started off their set and Larry spent half a song trying to break a beer bottle on the bass drum. It was kinda funny because it took him like ten times for some reason. When it finally broke he ran up to the front of the stage with it, accidentally slicing open Willy, their bass player's arm. Willy seemed to not even flinch. Then in some odd collaboration, Larry spits six feet across the stage and somehow Matt catches the spit in his mouth. From this moment forward I'd say I and everyone else at that show vowed to make sure to see this band every single time they ever played in NYC.

There really are too many live Candy Snatchers moments to put in one short column: from glass Christmas ornaments flying in my face, a guy swinging a 20 lb fish at people, fire being set to band members, Matt throwing his guitar full-force at the crowd, and Matt Army catching it in mid-air—blood, a whole lot of blood. Sometimes they would play one or two songs, be too messed up to do any more, and drive back to Virginia Beach. I seem to remember one stupid CMJ show where they played one song without Larry until he came up on stage, announced he had to take a shit and the set was over. There was another show where Larry hit his head slipping off the stage and announced, "I can't see! Let's do three more." For two years or so, at least a hundred people would always show up to see them (many of them told me years later that they never listened to one of their records, they just couldn't miss the spectacle). I'd pretty much say the collective mindset was, "We should see them now because they will probably be dead in a year or two."

In my mind a bar had been set. I have to admit, I will never be able to have that kind of honesty at anything I do, at least in a creative way. I can't write this column and actually spew out everything my mind wanders off to. I don't think very many people can be that honest with themselves, never mind in front of an audience. After seeing a band like the Candy Snatchers play a benefit for someone's misfortune of having testicle cancer, calling the man up on stage, asking for volunteers to have sex with him and asking, "Have they turned black yet?" in a drunken stupor that crushes any sense of pretension, I ask: can you do that? No. There's no way I can even think about it—it's too uncomfortable.

One of the first times Guitar Wolf came around, they were playing a few blocks away from another show the Candy Snatchers happened to be playing. The Guitar Wolf show was at a place called Brownies (which a couple years later would be known as the rich kid hipster band bar, but at this time was just the same loser bar where you're good for nothing band would play their show to their five friends). So our Japanese Brethren and us went down to see the Candy Snatchers, who ended early, and we all trekked over to the Guitar Wolf show. If I remember correctly, I supplied all the gear Guitar Wolf was using, and was waiting to help them set up. I'm not exactly sure how the show was booked, but one of those "eclectic NYU student" bands was playing when we walked in. The singer was a girl with an ample nose and long pink pigtails, the rest of the band were wearing striped suits, and I seem to remember a cello player. The woman's voice was pretty brutally awful, in that screechy early nineties way that hopefully took the path of the dodo. Everyone sort of politely waited in pain hoping they would not go into more than one or two more dreadful numbers. All of a sudden we hear a loud, "Get off the fucking stage!" It's Matt, and he's not being like that heckler guy in the back, he's right up front yelling in the singer's face.

"Hey, you know that's not very nice, we're playing and we have the right to play as much as anyone else."

"OK! Get off the stage you ugly bitch!"

"This is so rude, how can you act like that? I wouldn't say things like that if your band was playing."

"Shut the fuck up … cunt!"

It's funny, I remember Steve from the Devil Dogs, who isn't exactly Mr. Politically Correct, or Mr. Feminist for that matter, unable to look over at the woman's face as Matt shouted at her. The truth was, I don't care how gracious and open-minded any person in that room was, they were all was wishing they could tell her the same exact thing (anyone with two ears). Also, they got off the stage and everyone was glad Matt helped her out. As much as any of us would not want to condone such behavior, I had to admire Matt's ability to convey exactly what everyone was thinking. No really, they were really that bad. It was like a fart in an elevator and Matt would be the guy you want pressing the fire button.

So, one day George Tabb called me and said, "Tim Yohannon really likes the Candy Snatchers. He saw those pictures from the last CB's show where Matt's face got turned into hamburger. Wanna help me do an interview?"

"George, you helped me interview them two weeks ago—you don't remember? They got you drunk!"

"What? Are you serious? We did?"

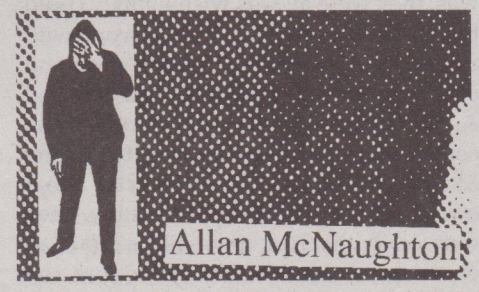
"Let me just email it to you right now." A couple of minutes passed while George reads the text… "Crap, I really told them I'd trade my wife for their groupie???"

It's sort of funny because in that interview Matt went into detail about a really embarrassing sexual encounter he had with a local Norfolk woman. I ran into him on St. Marks place and asked him how he liked the interview. "It's great, can you make sure no copies of that are lying around the show tonight? We got a ride from #### and we'll never get back home if she sees it."

Last spring I saw Matt for the last time at Squeaky's birthday party at our good friend Dean Rispler's house. I asked Matt how he was doing, and he went on with a story about how he was shooting up in his nose the night before, and the next morning sneezed and blood and the broken-off tip of a needle flew out. I then turned to Margo and explained to Matt that his similar remarks in my zine almost caused Margo and I to never meet. "After reading that interview, I thought you were a real creep and I stopped writing to you for a few years." After the party Margo seemed to understand why I found an interest in Matt and why he proved to be so entertaining. We ended up laughing it up for well over an hour that night. I will sin-

cerely miss the guy, but if nothing else I feel he has left something with me, and many, many others forever. Night dude.

If anyone else wants to leave some good Matt Candy Snatcher stories, his Myspace account's comments serve as a memorial—www.myspace.com/10162033. Yeah it made me cry a lot.



I was enjoying an after work Stella Artois along San Francisco's scenic Embarcadero with young Timmy Brooks the other day when we got to reminiscing (as we often do) about the good old days. We got onto the subject of our favorite UK punk zines from the '80s and early '90s, especially the best of the bunch, *Skate Muties From The 5th Dimension*. It's been noted that they "borrowed" a lot of their schtick (not to mention their entire layout) from Rev. Norb's *(Sic)Teen* zine, but no one did a better job of skewering the UK punk and skate subculture at the time. That period was a grim one in the world of UK punk zines.

I was obsessed with zines for a while. I wrote off for a new one just about every time I got a crudely mimeographed advert in a letter from someone (in those days every letter came in an envelope stuffed with extra dross in the form of distro lists, adverts for tapes, records, or zines, or pamphlets about animal rights (they would have cost a fortune to post if the entire British punk scene wasn't using the same half-a-dozen second class stamps, barely held together by the soap and glue used to render the postmaster's franking machine useless). A succession of flimsy, badly written, one-or-two-issue punk zines found their way into my letterbox. I'd get something in the post every day, but for the most part there was very little worth wiping one's arse with.

There must have been a list of rules and regulations somewhere about what you could or could not include in your zine. The first thing that had to be excluded at all costs was any sense of humor. However, as long as you had some reprinted "Hunt Saboteurs" pamphlets, articles on a woman's right to choose (written by a bloke, obv.), interviews with anarcho celebs of the day (our very own R. Kanaan of Political Asylum was a popular choice) and condemnations of any band that charged more than 50-pence to get into their gigs, you were alright. Screeds of poorly photocopied, cataract-inducing miniscule type were produced, condemning so-called anarchist activists for putting milk in their tea. Debate raged over whether or not Colin Conflict was seen patronizing the local McDonalds. Hundreds of dour, insipid metallic thrash bands without a tune between them were celebrated in crudely stapled zines that appeared to be printed on the same paper used as toilet paper in Soviet gulags.

This was the environment that Bristol's *Skate Muties* attempted to liven up with their mean-spirited, irreverent humor. Although they themselves were skateboarders and punk rockers, they made no bones about pointing out and ridiculing the more embarrassing elements in those scenes. Students, crusties, shit bands, skate posers, BMXers, foreigners of all stripes, Welshmen, northerners, and southerners all came in for a well-deserved slagging; but it was all done in such a unique, funny way that even if you were the object of humiliation, you had to laugh anyway. I think there are issues of this on the internet to be downloaded if you want to see what I'm talking about, although I don't know if it would have the same impact today. I think someone should compile all the issues into a book though. After *SM5D*, some of the Muties went on to start a magazine in a similar vein called *Bugs And Drugs* that was just as funny, but less about punk or skating and more about British culture in general, if I remember. I think they tried to capitalize on the popularity of the adult comic *Viz*, but maybe they were a bit too clever to be that successful.

Naturally, *SM5D* wasn't the only zine that tried to inject a sense of humor into an otherwise tedious and boringly self-referential world. Some others that came up during my chat with Tim included the infamous *Have A Good Laugh* (even if you didn't always agree with him, Trev *HAGL* wasn't afraid to ruffle a few punk purist feathers), *Raising Hell*, and *666 1/2*. One of Glasgow's three straight edgers (though none of the three of us can claim it any more) Adam Johnston put out a funny zine focused on international hardcore called *Go!*

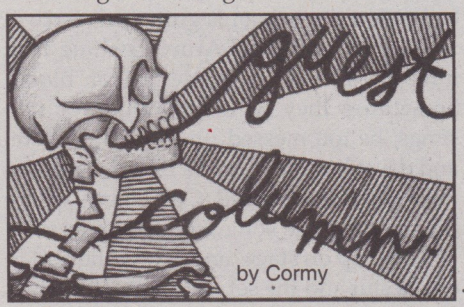
By the early '90s (with a few exceptions) most of these zines had called it quits, having been replaced by Riot Grrrl zines. The zines that weren't done by Riot Grrrls were very much influenced by that scene, so while there were many (no doubt worthwhile) articles on how to string together a couple of guitar chords, put on your own gigs, and take back the pit from macho white men (all while having an herbal abortion), there was a distinct lack of humor. After that the zine scene seemed to pretty much spiraled into an abyss of introspective, naval-gazing "personal" writing, and I lost interest in it, bar the odd issue of *Cometbus*.

It might seem (yet again) that I'm just being an old man griping about the good old days, but I do think that there's nothing going on these days that has the element of wicked humor that was so good about *Skate Muties*, *HAGL*, etc. If there is, I'm just not aware of it. I think people are reluctant to say anything negative about each other, even in jest, for fear of offending the wrong person. Everyone takes themselves so seriously. Are people all nicey-nicey in their record reviews and blogs because they don't want the free records to stop coming, or because they don't want to piss off their famous(!) friends?

Come on, let's all have a laugh while having our say, eh?

Back issues of *Skate Muties* or *Bugs & Drugs* can be sent c/o PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, USA. www.allanmcnaughton.com.

P.S. I should point out that Trev *HAGL* continues to publish zines under the names *Savage Amusement* and *Negative Reaction*, so hats off to him. He must be the UK's longest-running zinester. Cheers!



There're some messages going around these days to the tune of "Downloading mp3s is killing the punk scene." The one we (Nuclear Death Terror) just received is printed below. After responding to it that not only were we not interested, but that we were actually against charging money for music downloads, I checked out the CAH Downloads site (www.cahdown-

loads.com) and discovered that our album is the top selling record there—for eight dollars. We didn't give permission for this. Where's the money going?

I've nothing against Nick or CAH Records (or at least I didn't before this). It's a good label and he seems like a friendly, genuine guy. I presume one of the labels that released our album gave CAH Records permission to sell our music online, which we're entirely against. We'll get to the bottom of it and make sure the situation is remedied. I should probably find out what the story is and clear all that up before writing this—but I'm pissed off and astounded at this situation, so I'm not going to wait.

It brings up an interesting issue: that of music downloads. We're completely in favor of them. The fact that some of the biggest DIY punk labels around are against free music downloads has influenced our decision not to work with those labels before. The labels we do work with continue to sell out of their pressings of our records—whether on CD, vinyl or cassette—so although sales might be down from what they used to be, and postage more expensive, it's complete bullshit to say that downloads are killing the scene.

Music downloads are killing the scene for people who commodify and commercialize punk and make a living out if it. If that's what they want to do, that's their business (literally) and I won't villanize them for it. But when they claim that they're "trying to educate people that stealing mp3s is killing the entire scene right now," and describe selling mp3s on the internet as "total DIY" (it would more accurate to describe it as "total bullshit" or "a load of bollocks"), whilst making a profit from selling our music without permission, then naturally we're going to react.

Our LP and our demo are available for free at www.nucleardeathterror.blogspot.com, and after the first pressing is sold out of our new EP, that'll be up there too. File sharing and free music downloads are one of the greatest threats to property and copyright that have ever occurred. To describe it as stealing is ridiculous. The true theft is when people build on other influences to write original music, and then define that as their own "intellectual property" which they then attempt to protect with copyright. Fuck that shit. People will keep sharing music for free, and we'll support them in it.

Here's the message sent to us:

"Hey what's up? This is Nick from Crimes Against Humanity Records writing. First of all I ask that you read this whole email.

Since we all know music sales have drastically declined in the past few years mostly due to illegal downloading, I have decided to start a new website to sell mp3s by independent and underground bands. Would your band be interested in selling your releases at www.cahdownloads.com?

Why you should be interested:

1. Cahdownloads.com is the first independent and underground extreme music downloads site with no corporate ties.
2. It's a fact. CD sales are declining and vinyl is getting to the point now, and even more so in the future where it's going to be unaffordable to most people as well.
3. Mp3s are already extremely popular. My new album "End of All" has been downloaded thousands of times because people don't want to buy from iTunes and no longer buy CD or vinyl. We're trying to educate people that stealing mp3s is killing the entire scene right now, and with this site people will now have the option to support the scene and bands by buying songs through us for a cheap price.
4. It's a great way to keep all of your music available to your fans even if your music is out of print.

How it works:

It's simple. Once we get permission from you (and your label if they own the rights to your stuff) all we need are the files of your music. In some cases I may already have a good portion of your music here in stock so I could start right away.

Also you get to choose how much songs and albums are sold for. If you want to sell your songs for 10 cents or 99 cents each, that's up to you.

How you get paid:

We pay through paypal.com. Cah downloads.com keeps 33% of the total, and your band (or band and label if your label owns the rights to the recording) gets the rest.

Some bands and labels do not take mp3s seriously, but trust me—mp3s are huge and will remain so for quite a long period of time. If your releases are up on the internet for free (and we all know they are), why not try to sell your albums digitally and get compensated for your hard work on a non-corporate independent website? In other words: still total DIY.

Please consider this and let me know ASAP. I'll get your more details if you are interested.

Labels participating so far: Crimes Against Humanity, Havoc, Profane Existence, To Live A Lie, Rodent Popsicle, Fistolo, Inimical, Give Praise, Barbarian, Burrito, and several others. So far we have over 2,800 songs posted and sales are already coming in.

We have also printed up 25,000 print advertisements to promote the site.

Thanks for your time. Nick Carroll

A little more information:

I'll do all the work in getting each release on my site, as it's pretty time consuming. All I need from you is the songs 192 kbps or CD quality, and I'll convert them. I'd also need the song names and CD cover digitally, and the length of each song.

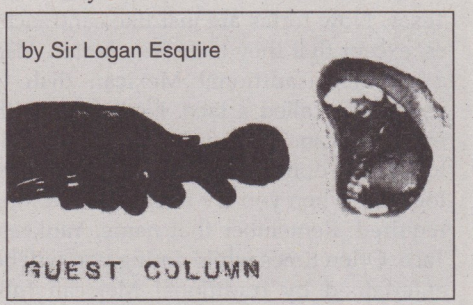
For your CD releases:

If you want, you can send me the actual CD and I'll do everything from there. Some of them I already might carry and could start on them as soon as you give me permission. What I'd also need are your EPs and LPs digitally. This should be easy since most masters are on CDR nowadays. You could just burn the CDR for me.

It'll work great for labels and bands, because once the files are up on my site there's no work involved for you.

Also we'd like to print and sell your band design shirt at www.cahrecords.com. If you are interested let me know, and I'll give you details on how royalties work."

Cormy



Walking on Water

I had just got home from an amazing trip when all of a sudden reality was thrown in my face by this stupid, white Rasta fuck that hangs out at my work. "Yo Ras, Ras?" Fuck, it kills me. The closest place to Jamaica that asshole's been was the reggae section at Best Buy. Every time I hear that piece of shit call me Rasta, a little piece of me dies. In an attempt to avoid further aggravation I bolted out the back door holding three plates of bullshit, making a B-line for table 23. Once I got

through the back door my coworker's three-year-old daughter Olive was standing before me, directly in my path. "Watch out Olive baby," I said. "Fuck off Logan," was her reply. Being told to fuck off by a three-year-old was an all time low for me. Why couldn't I be back down south where the good times and the bowel movements flowed like wine.

I had spent the last few weeks touring around Mexico with my homies or to you less cultured individuals, my amigos. Mexico is a lot like summer camp, the foods good and you don't wanna sit on any toilet seats. Everyone was so amazing and the weather was top notch. Being a Texan man such as myself, it was a very welcomed change to be able to go from 100-plus degree weather to 70 degree weather with the crossing of a little imaginary line. The "scene" there is incredible. Everyone's just trying to have fun. It seemed to me and my friends that people there are just looking for one hell of a good time while trying the escape the same meaningless dull void that we also call life.

The Food:

"Mexican" food or as BSA calls it, "normal" food, is gods gift to punks. Want it vegan? No problem. Want to get down with some *carne*? Fuck yeah, you do. Want it vegan but secretly want them to fuck up your order thus giving you a weird get-out-of-jail "I don't know how to say 'no cheese' in Spanish" free card. No Problem. Down there they have these things called *tortas* or sandwiches as we call them in the Texas. Now tortas are just like sandwiches, except that they taste way better. Also a popular traditional Mexican dish is something called a taco. Now, bear with me if you can. A taco is kinda like a burrito, or little donkey, except it actually stays together when you try to eat. No napkins required. Remember that name, Yankees. Taco. Often times while dining you will be entertained by traditional Mexican folk music. In Morelia we had the pleasure of dinning with crust punks while lulled into an eating frenzy with the powerful rhythms of the Village People and MC Hammer. No shit. Oh well, it beats shitty crust. There's also this food called…Well I forgot what its called, but its supposed to taste like fish though its just TVP and bullshit. Anyway, it sucks.

The Terrain:

Mexico has a vast plethora of geographical landscapes for your traveling pleasure. Whether you fancy the deserts of Nuevo Leon or the lush mountainous forests of the state of Mexico, south of the Rio Grande has got a little bit for everyone. I swear I saw a chubacabra fucking a jackalope in the desert by Sal Tillo, but I guess it could've just been a mirage or a KFC or something. I think my favorite is definitely the mountains. We don't really have those things here in big Tex, we have something more like big hills, which rich people use to build houses on so they can continually be able to look down upon and keep a watchful eye on the poor. We played one of the shows up in the mountains of Mexico City at a squat. We played on the roof while it was raining. It was kinda like a poor man's Woodstock, but for actual poor people, and not some rich kids with too much time, money, and bad acid on their hands.

The People:

I love Mexicans. Ive been touring with 'em for years and goddamn I love 'em. Keep the Dutch. Send more Mexicans. I had so much fun with the people down there that it brought tears to my eyes when I had to leave. Our generous host brought us into their homes, their country, and their hearts. There was Tio, one of my favorites. I know Tio means uncle in Spanish, but I still found myself calling him uncle Tio most of the time.

Tio liked two things, drinking and Swedish Pop music, which dramatically differed from his appearance. I always preferred it when he drove. Motherfucker drove fast as hell with no disregard for stop signs, traffic signals, and lanes. You can't drive in Mexico City on certain days, so for the second Mexico show we had to take trains and then later random cars to get to the show. On the way home, Tio drove us back to Roger's house during a torrential downpour. The streets got flooded due to the horrible drainage system, but Tio decided during theses hazardes conditions that the best way to get home was a drive real fucking fast, thus getting us there in a hurry. If it hadn't already shit in a bush by the venue, I would've right in his car. Mastur was our driver for the majority of the trip. He also liked equal parts shitty crust and Swedish pop music. Ok, 70/30 crust-to-pop, but who's counting. His dad "Don Master" came to the last show with us in Monterrey. That dude knows how to party and smoke. A friend of Masters gave us some organic tobacco from Oaxaca he has grown. Matt, Master, and I took pulls off that shit like little babies, Don Master took a puff and just shrugged and said he had better. We were green.

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That about sums up my Mexican adventure, I miss it more and more everyday. Europe ain't got shit on you Mexico. You're like the Geto Boys and their like Soulja Boy. You got more balls then a dude with three balls. Now to get back to work and make coffee and serve food to worthless hippies that don't care if I live or die just, so long as I don't scuff up their yoga mat with my shoes.

Send hate mail to:
Sir Logan Esq.
2933 Moss St.
Austin, Tx 78722

by John Fahy

GUEST COLUMN

Exclusive Punks Will Die
Part Two: Credentials, Credit Cards and Fan Clubs

"No, you're not doing your own thing. You're doing everything they want."
—LEFT FOR DEAD

And now an example of how to be cool:
Two punks meet at a diner. They are previously unknown to one another.
PUNK #1: What's up, other punk? Can I have some of those fries?
PUNK #2: Sure, have at them. If you can throw in some cash on the check, that would be cool.
PUNK #1: Definitely, thanks.
The two punks enjoy the fries together.

And now two examples of how *not* to be cool:
Same scenario, but PUNK #1 meets a different breed of "punk."
PUNK#1: What's up, punk dude? Can I have some fries?
EXCLUSIVE PUNK: Yeah, actually I'm the only one who can sell you these fries so I'll let you have this basket of them for three bucks.
PUNK #1: But this basket costs two bucks when I buy it from the diner directly.

EXCLUSIVE PUNK: Yeah, but the diner got tired of going around to the different tables to sell the fries, so you can only get them from me now, so I make a profit.

PUNK #1 is bummed. He'd really like some fucking fries but this other punk has cornered the market on them and is being greedy about it. Suddenly relief sweeps over him when he sees yet another punk seated at an adjacent booth enjoying some fries.

PUNK #1: What's up, punk rocker? Can I have some fries?

ELITE PUNK: Who are you? Are you on my mailing list?

PUNK #1: No, I'm just some hungry punk. I've never met you before, but I figure, you know, we're both punks, we both like fries...

ELITE PUNK: I don't think so man. These fries are limited to just one basket, and I've sold each fry to kids on the internet, after I intentionally had less cooked than I knew would be pre-ordered. If you kiss my ass for a couple of weeks via email, I can probably get you one or two of the special edition curly fries that I'm sending to the fryer in a month or two.'\

PUNK #1 is now beginning to think these other punks have fucked up ways of sharing something that they all love; fries. He loses his appetite and leaves the diner.

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There's one sickening trend that's become enraging to me over the last few years, and it's the head-patting, condescending attitude that established labels and bands show to the kids who support them. What's even more fucking galling than that is the amount of kids who swallow their shit. The notions of exclusivity and status in punk rock are not being challenged. There are a few constant, glaring examples that immediately come to mind that showcase punk and it's most elite and exclusive.

First, there's the plague of punk entrepreneurs who think they should apply their business college lessons in the underground. They have bogus, profit-driven labels that try to fool kids into believing they need to "pay dues," become interns, and scurry around promoting their bullshit releases—at no cost to the labels of course—aside from maybe tossing them some free merch or colored vinyl.

The strategy of work-for-nothing is directly out of the modern CEO playbook: the idea is to reduce cost by making naive people believe that it is a privilege to carry out the chores of such a prestigious establishment, and that one day it will pay off. That supposed independents are doing this and treating kids that are new to the scene like employees is a fucking disgrace. And while most kids are sensible enough to sense the lameness behind this and avoid it, some still fall for it—and the reason is straight-up fucking hero-worship.

It's always been a sad fact that some kids want to place punk bands, labels, and institutions on pedestals to adore. The cool ones responsibly reject it and admit they're not re-inventing the wheel—they're just doing their own art in the DIY arena like everyone else. Some others, though, are always willing to accept their place on the throne and make the most of it, whether for their bank accounts or ego, and so the charade continues on. Some that aren't driven by cash are enticed by the idea of mini-celebrity, and do their best to create the lie that they are a Big Deal. They are in the new band that everyone is talking about. They put out records by the new bands that everyone claims, in *Spin*-journalist fashion, are altering music as we know it. They know the right people and the right way to deal with the wrong people.

Punk isn't meant to be trivial and clique-ish, but historically the plagues of bogus-entrepreneur and hipster-insider have done their best to make it so, and continue to. Their sheer existence, irrelevant as it may be, isn't what's most enraging—it's that they provide a distraction from real hardcore made for neither money nor status. The really good shit.

The most influential and effective punk/hardcore records, to me, were the ones which were coming out in the early '90s from labels like Ebullition or Vermiform; that came with a glut of information, political writings, etc., because they actually cared about what they said and thought, and what you thought and had to say back. They didn't want adoration or money, they wanted feedback, and they encouraged involvement. Ebullition declared early in their existence that none of their releases would ever go out of print. Why would they want records that they felt could make an impact become bullshit collector's items when they could just keep making more of them and reach more people? Vermiform plastered the words "Pay no more than three dollars ever" directly on the cover of their early releases, and for a reason: they saw inaccessibility as a setback to be overcome.

Labels today strive to be inaccessible. When a label like Youth Attack litters their website with phrases like, "Those who order often will receive details of how to buy this record," you know you're dealing with people who do not value your opinion (unless you kiss their ass and "pay respects" by buying their entire catalog). It's fanclub bullshit: disrespectful, self-indulgent and boring. Purposefully limiting record pressings to fall short of the demand for them is the same idea: "Only a select few deserve this." The intent and effect of this is also to create false hype, which works with a lot of hardcore consumers ("I can't have this record, so I must."). Supply low, and demand high. Throw in some smart packaging, colored vinyl, and you've got yourself another *pog* to add to the collection.

So where are you at with dealing with these clowns? Are you waiting to get their music downloaded off Soulseek because you missed the boat on getting the record? Are you waiting patiently for instructions from the label on how to acquire one of their history-making hardcore jewels? Are you following email instructions on whose website to approach to put up a banner for some label that you idolize?

You don't need it. Hardcore is at it's most potent and dangerous when it bridges cultures and reaches and affects kids across the world. It's at its most base, pandering, clique-ish, self-serving and naive when it's huddled among a few privy nerds who think they're special because they're fucking stupid enough to believe they're "in the loop." Don't believe the hype; it isn't real. It's just another bunch of kids doing what you could be doing, only they're doing it with a spoiled brat attitude. Get to work starting your own shit and tell these dickheads to get fucked.

Next up: Part 3: Exclusive Distribution/Bob Suren Interview.

ENDNOTES:

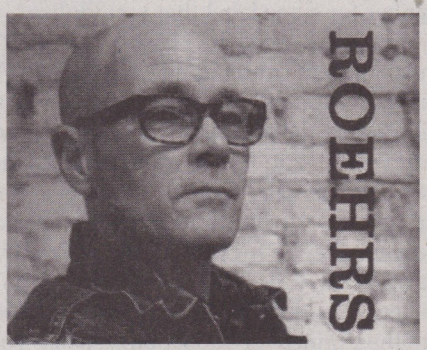
1. By the time this is printed, Divisions EPs will be available from me for $4.50 ppd. I am really proud to be putting this out—some of the heaviest, most hateful, scathing hardcore I've heard, with some of the best vocals ever. Comes with hand-screened covers and a sticker.
2. Cult Ritual has released an EP with my friends Chris' Drugged Conscience Records, and it is outstanding. Cult Ritual is a disgruntled mess, have real lyrics, and play hardcore songs that are catchy and unnerving at the same time.
3. I still have Baton Rouge's diabolical We

Need To Talk EPs available for $4.50 ppd, and next I will be putting out a 10" EP from the Last Crime, who plays weird, creepy music, is broken up, and featured Kevin from Beyond and 1.6 Band on vocals.

4. I've done a second small run of a bootleg DVD-r that I made with photocopied covers and inserts. Bands include Spazz, Halfman, Dropdead, CR, Milhouse and Indecision. Hours of music from some of the best hardcore bands ever for $5 ppd. All the cash goes to putting out more records.

5. My friend Joe is just finishing his all-Florida, sixth issue of *Seven Inches To Freedom*, and it will be ready by print time. Articles on Scrotum Grinder's first EP, a discography of Florida hardcore from the '90s, a Palatka retrospective, columns, reviews, and legions of other shit.

6. Karen from *Mixtapers Do It Better* and I have our split issue done finally. My side nerds out on shocking horror movies, and Karen's side nerds out on mixtapes. Send me a buck if you want one; John Fahy / 15011 Lakeside View Drive / Apt 2402 / Fort Myers / FL / 33919



Fuck! Ken Sanderson's Prank Records has delivered another vicious blow to the delicate little retro-punks! AVSKUM has stormed over the horizon with a record so strong they threaten to topple the throne occupied by TOTALITÄR! AVSKUM began scorching the earth in 1984 with the *Crucified By the System* EP! These six tracks of pure thrash and demolition signaled the beginning of a frightening legacy of brute-force hardcore! Twenty-some-odd years later this band remain one of the premier veteran punk units that young bands try to measure up to. Prank Records has issued a monster of a hardcore record with *Uproar Underifran*. Beware! You soft punks will be crushed immediately! AVSKUM bludgeons you with sixteen new hardcore burners! Some of the Swedish lyrics indicate the venom flowing through the songs: "Kapitalismens y tterstа dagar!" Other songs have English lyrics, which are pointed—read these words in the song, "The Massacre In Fallujah": "Violated bodies / Violated corpse / The lack of humanity / The sign of victory." In "Capitalism is Terrorism," AVSKUM sings "The war against the poor little boys and girls / They die all alone in the fireshower flesh burns to the bone"! This record is nothing short of brilliant! Order your copy today from Ken at Prank Records, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com

Fuck yes! New Jersey's Oi! stalwarts THE WRETCHED ONES, has two new raging skinhead anthems for you fucks! On this 45 you get two skinhead rock and roll gems that appeared earlier this year on the *Make It Happen* CD (Headache #64) and now receive the spotlight on this release. The best song from *Make It Happen*, "I'm in a Rut," serves well as the A-side of this 45. "I'm in a Rut" features blue-collar lyrics that a lot of you punks won't understand: "Here it comes the rat race / Same time and the same place / Same faces everyday / I wanna run away / Another day, a rerun / I did a lot but I had no fun / At night I'm in a heap / I have big plans but I fall asleep." Fuck! That's the working class struggle put to words! THE WRETCHED ONES remains among the last spokesmen for the lower/middle-class labor men and women of our culture! The B-side of the new WRETCHED ONES single is "Lady Boss," which has its moments! The lyrics behind this story are quite humorous! The record is a must-have for New Jersey/Pennsylvania/New York skinheads. Some other skinhead songs on the *Make It Happen* CD that will hold your attention are "Rockers Will Always Stay Together," "Skinhead Neighbor" and "The Journey is Better than the Destination." This is fucking great American Oi! music! Order your WRETCHED ONES 45s and CDs from: Headache Records, PO Box 204, Midland Park, NJ, 07432, www.headachrecords.com

Hold on to your fucking socks! Two dangerous metal mongers have released a huge apocalyptic split 7" for you! BRODY'S MILITIA from Medina, Ohio and GHOUL from the San Francisco Bay Area have teamed up for a mind-numbing metal-fest! Rescued From Life Records out of Texas presents one of the most difficult records of the decade! GHOUL comes out steaming on side A with some maniacal, black, guttural death metal. The negative thrash on this split EP perpetuates all the evil incarnations that emerged on the Tank Crimes GHOUL LP that Scotty released. GHOUL slogs through the bleak epic "Roadkill" and finishes you off with "Gloomy Sunday." This is fucking brutal shit! Side B is a real treat for you headbanger types! The infamous BRODY'S MILITIA from the buckeye state drops major ordinance on you! Doug and his unruly compatriots fucking level the playing field! BRODY'S MILITIA lead off with "Nerve Damage" and then slam right into "Lying In Wait." This is fucking great! The third salvo is "Knuckledragger." Hold on you fucks! The grand finale is "Knife Fighting In Finland." Fuck yes! On this hard-charging split you get a sleeve adorned with magnificent and thoroughly macabre illustration by Nor Prego. Excellent! For your copy of the GHOUL/BRODY'S MILITIA split EP write to: Rescued From Life Records, c/o Clay Newell, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX, 76117, www.myspace.com/ rflrecords

Fuck! WARCRY from Portland, Oregon has a blistering new LP out on Mr. Yannick's Feral Ward label. This devastating WARCRY 12" is entitled *Not So Distant Future* and kicks a large amount of punk ass. Those of you who saw WARCRY play a series of shows with HELLSHOCK last year remember the tremendous power of these guys! WARCRY hammers you with seven songs that clock in at under two minutes. "Black Out," "Sensory Overload," "The New Age," "Hellish Slaughter," "Living Nightmare," and "When Comes The End" all grab you by the throat and don't let go! This is fucking top-notch hardcore punk! For your copy contact Feral Records: feralward.com

OBLITERATION from Cambridge, Mass, USA has dropped an atomic bomb on you hapless fucks! The *Megatons* EP is absolutely relentless thrash with a clear indication that no prisoners will be spared! After a brain-shredding episode on side A with "Megatons," OBLITERATION fucks you up with "World Destruction," "Extermination," and "Fascist System" on side B. These fucks will take your thrash I.Q. beyond TRAGEDY and close to the frenzied level of Canada's FUCKED UP. These young thrashers have harnessed the power of Satan and brought you bad music for bad people. Write to OBLITERATION: 516 Green St. Unit 1B, Cambridge, MA, 02139

Holy fuck! San Francisco was treated to

an amazing free show at Molotov's bar. Grant organized a punk line-up to kill for! Grant, Mackey, Beau, Nathan, and Willie opened up the festivities with their wild band DOPECHARGE. These guys went off hard playing "Possessions," "No Complaint," "Brain of Wheat," "Faceless Sold," "Build the Bomb" and "At the Rate We're Going." Fucking great! Next up was THE YOUNG OFFENDERS who have won over punks of every description: '77-style, hardcore, brit-pop, they all come out to see THE YOUNG OFFENDERS! Tim and Dougie and the lads played "Pilled Up," "Hard Life," "Big Man," "Saints," "Big Cities," "Love and War," "Battleships," and "Black Hands." Everyone had a good time! The third band was the well-respected Portland punk band DEAD SECTION. Tony and his bandmates proceeded to destroy Mototov's! Amongst others we heard "World Grey," "Conclude" and "Diluted Upsurge" which appeared on the excellent DEAD SECTION EP. We also got a great cover of "Forced Ideals" which was a song by Tony's old band RELIGIOUS WAR. The show was most enjoyable!
Until next month – See you fucks at the bar!

Punk Does Not Owe You a Living/Alive with Pleasure!

I think the best thing I have listened to this month has been the last song on side two of the Beef People 7" that came free with *Artcore* zine. Mutant teenage shitbag sounds from mid-'80s Virginia outsiders; includes sounds of a paper cutter as well as melting brains, doomed times, and the true sound of youth hardcore damage... As a kid I spent a good portion of my time making tapes at random dudes' houses. Sitting on living room floors, C30, C60, C90, GO! Putting Septic Death next to Rites of Spring, Mekons next to Necros, just consuming vast histories of music, finding one thing that resonated maybe, then using that as a key to figure out a way into other similar bands and sounds. The Fury 7" leading to Swiz and so forth. DC to the Midwest to Boston; you know the drill. One of the first records I got obsessed with upon becoming a shitworker here was The Left *Hell* 12" which was recommended me as a contemporary band of the Revolution Summer sound and scene, and the first thing I thought was "if only I had heard that record as a kid." But back to the mutant sound...

I have and have always had this obsession with finding bands that represent that total miscreant sound as exemplified by the aforementioned Beef People song. Just to get that feeling continually… The first time you heard Die Kreuzen or Void or Neos; there must be a million mystery bands out there that will give a girl that feeling, right? *Right?* I think I already talked about Malefice and United Mutation. There's Media Disease, too... I dunno, I have this weird tape loop in my head of my voice harassing collector scum endlessly since my youth: "The song "Explode" by Void is my favorite thing ever; what else is there? What else???"

One thing I was thinking about in regards to the above incoherent ramblings is that now random music nerd girls don't have to go to said dudes' houses to make tapes anymore—the internet opens a world up that definitely didn't exist when I was a kid. Just the access to music you would never have heard of unless you were involved in some crazy tape trade with a Swiss punk circa '82... Speaking of which, have you seen the new book, *Hot Love: Swiss Punk & Wave 1976-1980*? It sounds like a very specific book in terms of subject matter—I mean, Swiss punk? Really?? And this is a *huge* tome, more than mere coffee-table book—it's the size of a fucking coffee table.

When you think of Swiss punk, maybe Jack and the Rippers comes to mind, Liliput/Kleenex too, but is that enough to justify buying a $69 object that's just about the size of a phone book?? It's way more compelling than more "conventional" punk books about less specific scenes. Aesthetically it works like a more minimalist *Fucked Up and Photocopied*, with tons of zine and flier reproductions, but also old shirts, homemade bondage footwear, and yes, actual interesting interviews, some with bands and people you've never heard of and probably never will get to actually hear! And it doesn't even matter. The roundtable with Marlene from Lilipit/Kleenex, Sylvia from Mother's Ruin, Sara from TNT, Marie from The Bastards, and various female fanzine editors was unsurprisingly one of my favorite parts of the book. The subtext of the discussion doesn't revolve around the trials and tribulations of being a woman in punk. It's just about being a young punk, about discovery and disgust, degenerate parties and disrupted political rallies, which was kind of refreshing in the face of endless wimmin in rock boredom. So many rad photos; the one of Marlene in a Bazooka Joe t-shirt, leopard pants, and Jean Sebereg haircut... Also I had no idea that Ramona from The Mo-dettes was Swiss; there's an incredible interview/oral history that covers her move from Geneva art school troublemaker to London punk scenester. That sounds trite; we're talking nazi stage invasions, redneck attacks in OC bars, and the story of one of the coolest girl punk bands of that era. The Mo-dettes 7"s are fucking great—sarcastic pop-edged punk that isn't overly arty or sanctimonious.

Hot Love sums up the random adventure that is punk: pictures of scummy practice spaces, dada-vomit fanzine excerpts, endless random anecdotes and ephemera. I think it's being marketed in an art-world context (I picked up a copy at oogaboogastore.com), which is weird maybe, considering the very particular subject matter, but not really in terms of the general aesthetic of the book. It just covers so evocatively and eloquently what it means to be a punk, in a way that's less glass-covered exhibit and more "We did it, why don't you??" It's difficult to write about an era of a subculture and depict it without being dismissive of what came after or dogmatic about how things should be, and this book makes you feel part of a continuum rather than reading about something that you could never achieve.

I am gonna do some sort of a History Lesson Part 2.5 in regards to some recent and not so recent all-girl punk discoveries. Secret code message to thee ladies: Tape these records. Start bands.

1. The Nixe were an all-girl band from Utrecht in the early '80s, formed initially in reaction to their boyfriends starting a punk band. They produced a 7" with hand-made covers and were on a live comp LP that I think I've played on the radio. In fact, I know I played it on the radio; Golnar told me she went out and found a copy of it and formed a band as a result. Just to fill you in on the type of music that awaits and what it'll do to you!

Their sound reminds me of The Modettes; it's less polished and more rambunctious however; not quite as crazed as, say, Kleenex; rawer and less artsy. Just to reference the same three bands over and over and over!! For all eternity! It's how I do. The 7" is incredible—a total explosion of fierce yet bratty intensity. The *MRR* copy is in a red envelope with a black scrawled cover, no lyrics, no images, no band info... Finally having an entire LP (gatefold!) available with all of the above so those without eBay millions can have access to the jams is the best... It's on Polly Maggoo Records.

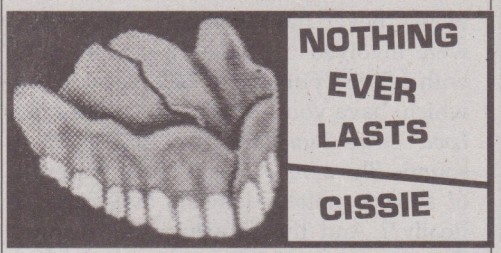
2. Chin Chin were from Switzerland. They were around post-*Hot Love*—a mid '80s band I think. They're definitely on the more sweet pop/punk end of things, but not like C86 indie-pop style at all—they are distinctly punk, they actually kind of reminded me of a less saccharine Go-Go's... The songs are really catchy, much less 'difficult' to listen to than most music by art school girls from the same era. I sound dismissive maybe, I don't mean to be, it's a killer 7" but I guess right now I am searching out more mutant fucked up music and this isn't that. The "hit" is "Don't Want To Be Prisoners," which actually has a watchable video if you use the power of the internet. I am not sure what else they have out, but that 7" is worth seeking out

3. Nog Watt were fucking raging Dutch thrash with the best hardcore girl vocals I have heard (sorry Sacrilege fanz.) *The Fear* 7" may have some of the coolest, genuinely creepy packaging ever—some for-real Manson-girl-style-now. I really, really want this record. I wanna hear No Pigs, too, which was the drummer Ingrid's other band, just because it's a killer band name and if it's half as good as this... Which is to say this record is kind of perfect; someone needs to reissue it so random teenage girls in boring towns can hear it and realize the possibilities that being in an all-girl hardcore band can offer. Like, I honestly feel Riot Grrrl would have been ten times more interesting musically if girls had gotten into Nog Watt rather than Sleater Kinney. Seriously. Maybe Nog Watt *and* The Raincoats or whatever… I dunno I just don't get why there aren't hundreds of rad weirdo girl bands like this, maybe there are. Where are they? I have this theory that Sleater Kinney made girls into indie rock fans instead of making them wanna make their own sound. Nog Watt is the answer and the question.

4. The Nurse—Japanese hardcore. There are two flexis and the first one is the best. The band is rocking full on Siouxie style on the cover; the music is tough and relentless. It's really heavy without being a formulaic hardcore or metal sound, perhaps the aural equivalent of a sneer. I dunno how to really describe it except to say that all you need is this and the Nog Watt and you're ready to start your own fuckin' secret society of girls... Do it! Kreepkrawl style.

Top Ten Jams
1. Outlets – *Best Friend* 7"
2. Cro-Mags – demo boot 10"
3. Marginal Man – *Identity* 12"
4. Rain 12"
5. Beef People – "Industrial Jelly" (the song)
6. Tar Babies – *Respect Your Nightmares* 12"
7. Abgas 7" (now THIS is Swiss punk-end-times collapse in on itself style)
8-10. Shit, I dunno. Mexican aggro-synth. Busy boredom. Pizza.

whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com
layla@maximumrocknroll.com



My Existence Is Stubborn

I've been reading all about the credit crisis and I don't know what to make of it. Feel free to call me ignorant, but the stock market has always seems liked a clusterfuck to me, particularly the investing aspect as I don't tend to look toward the future and if I'm gonna gamble I like to make it quick and easy. I'm also the kind of person that doesn't spend money that I don't physically have. I have a credit card and I used it once and paid it off in haste. The idea of paying more than something is worth doesn't usually appeal to me. Being debt free in '08 feels OK and I don't have to worry about losing that 401k that I worked so hard for 'cause I've never had one.

For some reason I read all of the articles in the business section of *The New York Times* website, trying to make sense of it all. At the moment, and from a selfish perspective, I couldn't feel more detached from this economic crisis, but I guess if things get bad enough it could effect my work situation. Unskilled labor doesn't have much of a place in an economic depression when people aren't spending their money frivolously. Still I can't help but think, let the fuckers bleed for a while. Fuck a debt, but fuck a debt crisis even more, especially since it was the greed of the banks and lenders that caused the so-called bubble. I have to say, I'm not sweating the economic crisis '08. It only strengthens my ideal of a simpler life devoid of money markets, oil prices, credit debt, etc. I do feel bad for folks that might lose their retirement funds or homes and I worry for my parents since they are nearing retirement and completion of their mortgage payment, but I feel reassured about my more frugal tendencies.

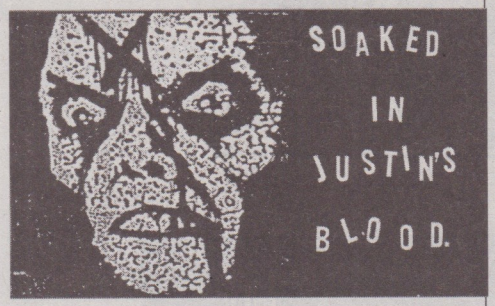
***

MRR is no stranger to changes. You may have noticed that the magazine has a slightly different look this month and if you haven't, then avert your eyes to the top of this page. Justin spent some time designing us some shiny, new templates and although I'm biased, I think the magazine is lookin' good these days. Also, we have four new columnists: Brontez Purnell, Juls Generic, Brace Belden, and Ariel Awesome. It seems like the columns have been pretty static for the past several years and it's nice to have a variety of new voices on board. Erika Ransom and Dave Adelson will no longer be submitting columns and I wish them well with their future endeavors and thank them for their past contributions.

***

I want to publicly apologize to all of my friends that haven't received an email reply or returned phone call from me. I've been totally slacking on communication—I racked a grand total of 137 minutes on my phone bill last month. One of these days I won't be so stressed and busy and I'll be able to keep up a conversation and send packages that I've promised, etc. Sorry. For what it's worth I miss having free time and keeping in touch with people. And while we're on the subject of guilt, I do feel bad that I don't go to many shows these days. But if San Francisco doesn't get a decent DIY venue anytime soon, it's not likely that this will change because in case you haven't noticed bar shows are *booorrrrring*.

Endnotes:
1. Fuck the bus. Seriously, it's one of the worse ways that I semi-regularly spend 20-30 minutes of my time.
2. Frozen pizza rules. I miss the HEB purple box, but the Trader Joe's $4 special is a decent replacement.
3. Playlist bonanzo equals Ääritila, Sacred Shock, Lungfish, Templars, Kinks, Obliteration, Puke, PESD, Klaxon, Wipers, Sieg Heil, Headcleaners.
4. Last month I wrote about the local record store/venue Thrillhouse. They've had some developments with their situation, and in short, they can no longer have shows but they can continue to operate the store and live in the space. Visit 'em if you're in San Francisco at 3422 Mission Street.
5. Communicate via cissie@maximumrocknroll.com. The most likely way to get a hold of me...



"Would you still be my friend if these fries weren't there?"
In Your Face "The Grub"... "Keep your hands off my fries. You've eaten yours these are mine." Some genius lyrical wizardry right there. But seriously, words to live by, words to die for. I had heard this song on some oldish Lost And Found comp CD but until now had never heard the whole 7". It's surprisingly good late '80s NYHC all the way through. yrical

***

I know it's fucking stupid and cliché to start a column with this (following) copout bullshit statement, but I really ain't got dick to say this month. Nothin'. No killer records, really. No terrible records to write about either. I've kinda got senioritis too. Starting today, I officially have one more month as coordinator of *Maximum*. Tonight I just moved my first load of "why the fuck do I still have all this" stuff out of the house and into my new pad. Starting tomorrow I'll be living in a single family home with a big ass yard in the inner Richmond district of SF with a couple friends. An affordable single-family house with a yard in San Francisco is the bay area real estate equivalent of a Fix *Vengeance*. Psyched, but on the other hand moving fucking sux! Why can't I get rid of old birthday cards from my parents or piles of crappy doodles that I did at a job I had five years ago cause I didn't feel like working that aren't even good or interesting? I just can't. It's so stupid that whenever it's time to relocate, I have more and more pointless fucking crap to lug. When I moved to Portland in 2001 three of us fit all of our belongings in a fucking Hyundai from Boston, and now here I am with 27 huge boxes to move across town plus a bed, guitars and amps, stereo shit and a giant record shelf. I'd say it's time to settle in and stay put or get rid of all this crap. Speaking of housing, how 'bout that economy, aye? Honestly, who gives a shit. You know who's gonna be fine no matter what happens to *them*? We are. Those of us that every month have to find some way to pay their bills and scrape by every fucking month without a penny in their pockets four days before pay day. We're used to this shit and will be the ones laughing when they come and take away your fucking Hummer. Shit's gonna get rough though. Everyone's so comfortable having everything they want and everything they need, that when it comes down to pure survival, shit's gonna get crazy. Hell, the other day I saw a dude in a wheelchair get beat up and robbed on Mission Street and there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it, I was too far away. People are fucking scum but when it comes down to survival, the gloves are really off.

***

"Let them hate, provided they fear."

***

My favorite songs this month couldn't be further from punk, to be honest, but these are some other things that have kept me going for the last thirty days... Lemonheads "Uhhhh" from *Hate Your Friends* a perfect song—great lyrics, crude Replacements-sans-wankery riffing, and enough angst to keep it out of the college-rock drone zone. Hell, practically the whole record is killer. The Clay's songs on the *Great Punk Hits* comp LP are straight killer and the guitar solos alone make me melt. I've been trying to keep the Underdogs "East of Dauchau" on the hush hush until I found a copy but fuck it, right? If I were a true asshole, I'd tell you that this song is the blueprint for No Hope For The Kids and Criminal Damage. I know it's not rare or expensive but I can't find a copy, so someone send me one! Gastunk "The Eye's" on *A Farewell To Arms*—it's bouncy, it's catchy, and the solos are all teased hair, white Flying-Vs and make up. Ace. And last but certainly not least, the debut EP from Japan's Unkind somehow managed to slip by the *Maximum* radar. This mammoth EP, appropriately titled *Crustie Not Hippies*, along with the Kriegshög 7" might be my two favorite EPs of '08 and are gonna be giving Framtid some real competition for kings of the blown-out noisy crust crown. Now, I know there no where near that ferocity yet, but Daniel LaRussa didn't annihilate Cobra Kai's ass at the beginning of the movie either now, did he. I'm just saying.
If you made it this far, thanks and I apologize for wasting your time.
I'm a little behind but I post these things and some other things here: deadstareforlife.blogspot.com
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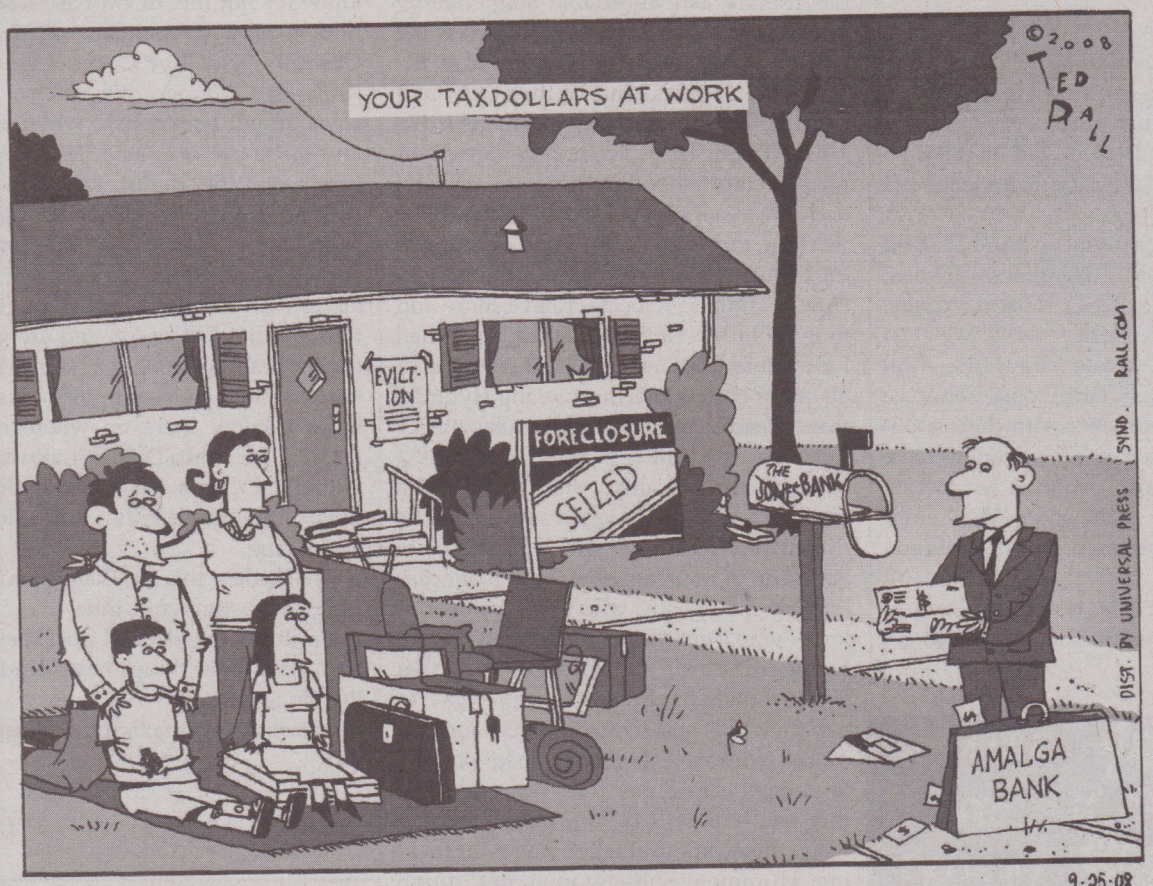
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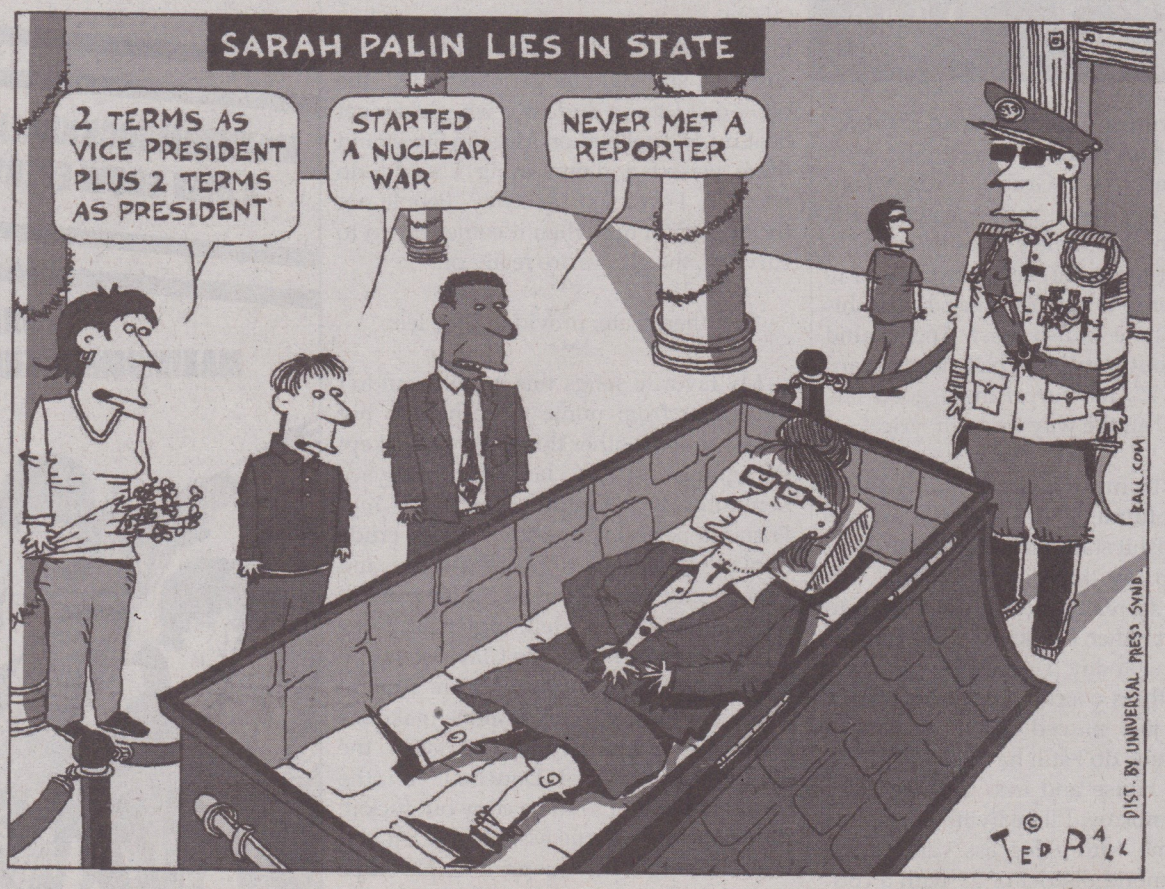
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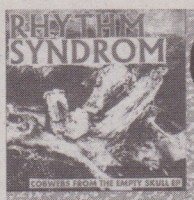

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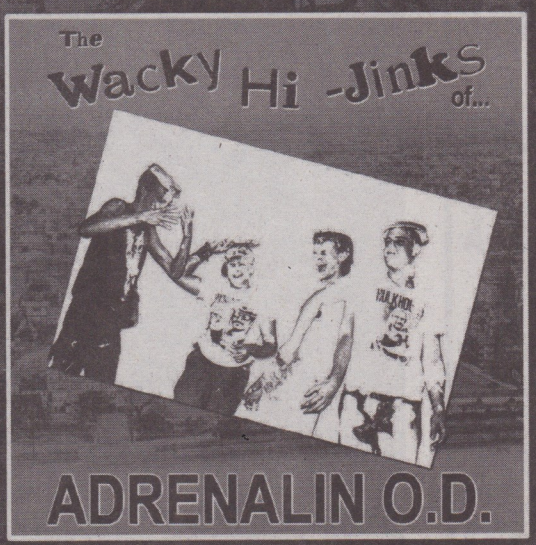

8 REASONS WHY "THE WACKY HI-JINKS OF ADRENALIN O.D." IS BEING REISSUED ON CHUNKSAAH RECORDS

1. The cost of Garden State Parkway tolls paid commuting to the record label offices was determined to be equal to or greater than the projected earnings.
2. The band mistakenly believes that a reunion and change in musical direction will be given credibility by signing deal with KRUMPsaah Records.
3. The upkeep on the "Rock and Roll Gas Mansion" was draining band coffers dry.
4. Reissue part of AOD/BOUNCING SOULS court settlement over custody of WFMU DJ Pat Duncan.
5. The band welcomes another opportunity to accuse each other of stealing money.
6. Bloggers suggested that reissuing LP may be just the catalyst needed to FINALLY unite punks and skins.
7. Band advised to raise capital to invest in new venture, THE PAUL DECOLATOR SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.
8. The time is right to cash in on the band's popularity with Norwegian Black Metal, and recent endorsement from Fenriz of Darkthrone.

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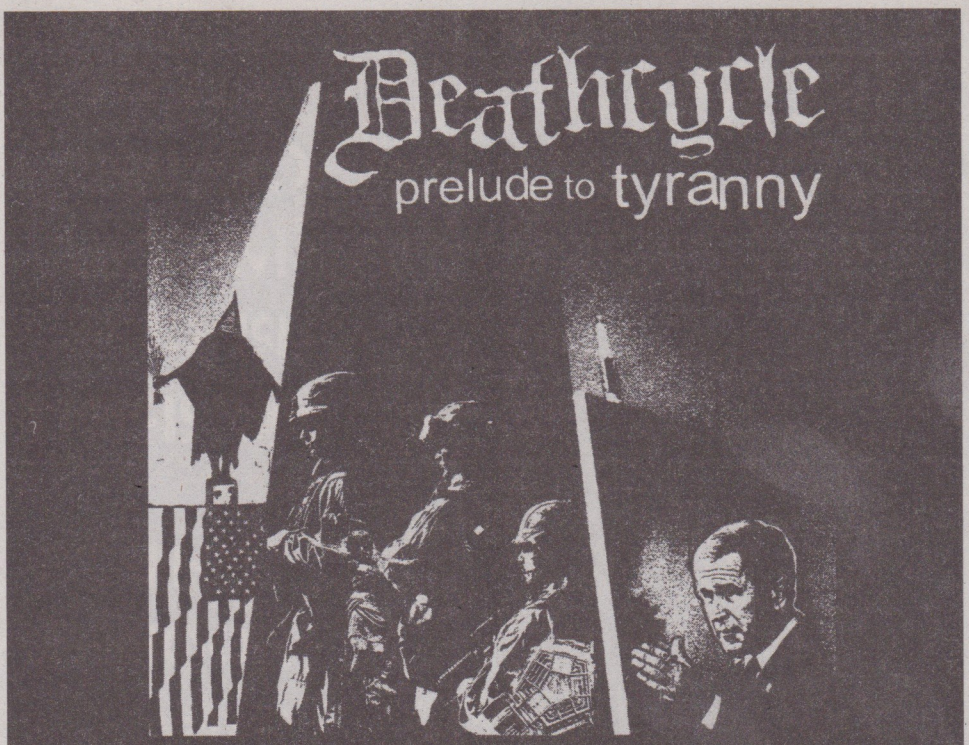

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NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #306 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE AND OUR MAGICAL NEWS ELF

SHELL OPENS AN OFFICE IN BAGHDAD AFTER A 36-YEAR ABSENCE

By Sam Dager
From an article in the *New York Times*
BAGHDAD—Royal Dutch Shell, one of the world's biggest oil companies, completed a multibillion-dollar natural gas deal with the Iraqi government and said it had established an office in Baghdad—the first foreign petroleum giant to do so since Iraq nationalized its oil industry more than three decades ago.

The company described its decision to open an office here as a milestone that partly reflected the vast improvement in Iraq's stability compared with conditions during the worst years of the war. But in a sobering reminder of the underlying dangers of doing business here, the company would not disclose the location of its office, and the senior Shell official who announced the gas deal was accompanied by a phalanx of armed guards.

"We are ready to establish a presence," the official, Linda Cook, executive director of the company's gas and power unit, said during a news conference in Baghdad's heavily guarded Green Zone. Ms. Cook, who oversaw the signing of the gas deal with the Iraqi government, appeared with Iraq's oil minister, Hussain al-Shahristani.

The joint venture—to recapture gas that now goes to waste during oil extraction in Basra, in southern Iraq—is the company's official return to Iraq after 36 years. Shell, along with the predecessors to BP, Exxon Mobil, and Total, was among the original partners in the Iraq Petroleum Company before the companies lost their concessions to nationalization as Saddam Hussein rose in the 1970s.

Much of the recaptured gas will go to power stations and industrial sites like petrochemical and fertilizer plants, Mr. Shahristani said.

The signing of the deal was expected; Shell is one of more than 30 foreign companies bidding on long-term contracts for six important oil fields. The winners are to be announced in 2009. A condition for any winning bid set by the Iraqi government is that the company be willing to establish a presence in Baghdad.

Shell was also among a smaller group of Western companies negotiating no-bid contracts to help Iraq increase production from existing oil fields, but the process was suspended earlier this month following criticism from several United States senators.

Mr. Shahristani praised the gas joint venture, which will be 51 percent owned by the Iraqi government through the South Oil Company and 49 percent by Shell, as a step to address Iraq's chronic and crippling power shortages.

Besides their economic implications, the power problems have become a highly charged political and emotional issue for Iraqis.

The deal with Shell came on the heels of a $3 billion agreement with China to develop the Ahdab oil field in the south, which was signed last month.

Eleven people died in violence on the same day as the signing, and the American military said a soldier had been killed by small-arms fire in Baghdad on Sunday.

In Diyala Province, two people were killed when a roadside bomb was detonated near the car they were driving in, according to police officials in Baquba, the provincial capital.

In Hamam al Alil, a town about ten miles south of Mosul, five children were killed and three were wounded when their soccer ball hit a roadside bomb on the street where they were playing.

In Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated his car at midday near a Shiite mosque in the busy Karrada neighborhood, killing himself and two passers-by and wounding nine people. A mortar shell killed one person in the Tobchi neighborhood, on the west side of the Tigris.

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US SOLDIERS ACCIDENTALLY KILL SUNNI LEADER IN IRAQ

By Kim Gamel, Associated Press Writer
BAGHDAD—American soldiers accidentally shot and killed the leader of a local US-allied Sunni group after coming under attack in a volatile area north of Baghdad, the military said. The shooting comes a week before the Shiite-led Iraqi government begins to assume authority over the Sunni groups known as the Sons of Iraq, or Awakening Councils. The military has credited the Sunni revolt against al-Qaida in Iraq as a key factor in the sharp decline in violence over the past year.

The head of the group in Siniyah, Jassim al-Garrout, was killed after he rushed to the site of an ambush against U.S. forces in the area, which lies between the northern oil-hub of Beiji and Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, according to witnesses and police.

One of al-Garrout's comrades said the group would demand an apology from the Americans. "The Awakening Councils have become targets of al-Qaida, the government and sometimes even the U.S. forces. We do not know our fate and we are feeling lost," Farooq Sami said. "We are undertaking the task of combating terrorists, yet we are left sometimes unpaid and without money. We have participated in maintaining peace and security in our area, yet we sometimes do not get our salaries." Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin, the No. 2 US commander in Iraq, said that the Iraqi government will soon begin paying the salaries of about 54,000 of the mostly Sunni fighters in the province surrounding Baghdad.

Before the incident occurred, the US soldiers were hunting for insurgents and weapons after they were hit by a roadside bomb and small-arms fire near Siniyah, 110 miles northwest of Baghdad, according to an e-mailed military statement. The troops then came under fire while searching a house and "shot a Sons of Iraq leader who was mistaken for the enemy when he entered the house," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. David Russell, a US military spokesman in Baghdad. Medical aid was administered, the military said, but the troops were unable to save al-Garrout.

Russell said the US soldiers had warned their Sunni allies to identify themselves and to stay clear of the house.

WATER EXPERT SLAMS BIOFUELS, MEAT AT GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Associated Press
STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The winner of the Stockholm Water Prize slammed the growing use of biofuels and urged people to eat less meat—to help cut the amount of water used in food production.

British professor John Anthony Allan said the effect of the growing use of biofuels "is too frightening to even begin to realize." Allan, 71, of King's College, London, was awarded the 2008 water prize for his concept of "virtual water," which measures amounts of water used in the production of food and industrial products.

He also urged people to cut down on meat consumption, saying it was "bad for the environment." "Non-vegetarians consume five cubic meters (176 cubic feet) of water per day; your bath is a tiny puddle compared to that. It is the water for food that is the big problem," Allan told The Associated Press. "Be rational and eat less meat." He was speaking on the sidelines of the World Water Week, a conference attended by 2,500 scientists, politicians and officials from 140 countries. Allan will receive a $150,000 cash award at a ceremony in Stockholm City Hall.

A report unveiled earlier showed that people in developing countries are facing growing health risks caused by the widespread use of raw sewage to irrigate crops. The International Water Management Institute, which published the findings, said that more than half of farmland near 70 percent of cities in Third World countries is watered with sewage that threatens to spread epidemics. "Irrigating with wastewater isn't a rare practice limited to a few of the poorest countries," said Liqa Raschid-Sally, a researcher at the institute. "It's a widespread phenomenon, occurring on 20 million hectares (50 million acres) across the developing world, especially in Asian countries, like China, India, and Vietnam, but also around nearly every city of sub-Saharan Africa and in many Latin American cities."

An increasing demand for water and food has spurred the use of sewage to water crops but in many cases is the only form of irrigation for farmers who lack clean water, the study showed. It is mostly used to produce vegetables and cereals, and poses a major health risk to consumers of uncooked vegetables. However, the report said sewage also provides a livelihood for many by making possible the cultivation of land, and it recommends an increase in purifying water supplies rather than a total ban on the use of wastewater.

Conference participants also stressed the need to increase transparency in the water production chain. Up to 45 percent "of costs for providing clean water around the world go toward corruption," Transparency International global programs director Christiaan Poorter told The Associated Press. Other participants include Malagasy President Marc Ravalomanana and Dutch Crown Prince Willem-Alexander.

ZAC CONNOR RIP

By Josh Smith
On August 28th we lost an integral member of the Syracuse hardcore punk scene. Zachary Aaron Connor died of a heart attack, resulting from a previously unknown heart condition. Survived by his parents, Kathi and Bill, and his older sister, Ashley, Zac was only 19 years old. He was a student at Finger Lakes Community College, pursuing a career in music recording. Zac had been a regular face at Upstate NY hardcore shows from early in his teenage years. He played bass and guitar in some of Assault City's best bands (Attempted Control, Warvomit, No Followers, and the infamous Dry Heave, just to name a few). Zac's passion and enthusiasm for punk were unparalleled in the local community, and his smiling face will be sorely missed for years and years to come.

MYANMAR RELEASES LONG-SERVING POLITICAL PRISONER

From the Associated Press

YANGON—Myanmar's longest-serving political prisoner was among more than 9,000 inmates freed this past month, days before the first anniversary of the junta's deadly crackdown on anti-government protests led by Buddhist monks.

Win Tin, a journalist-turned-activist and aide to pro-democracy opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, was held for 19 years. He was one of at least seven political prisoners released, Amnesty International said. The rights group said there are an estimated 2,100 political prisoners in Myanmar, which has been under military rule for 46 years and is one of the world's poorest and most authoritarian nations.

A longtime journalist and poet, while in prison Win Tin would write poems on the walls of his cell with ink made of brick powder and water, according to supporters who visited him. He said he would keep wearing his prison blues as a sign of protest against the military rulers, and he vowed to keep pressing for more freedom. "I have to continue with my unfinished task of trying to achieve democracy in Myanmar," he said from a friend's home in Yangon after being released from Insein Prison.

While incarcerated, Win Tin had two heart attacks, a hernia operation and suffered from high blood pressure, diabetes, and spinal inflammation, according to international media groups. Now 78, he appeared alert and healthy despite recent reports of being ill. Asked how it felt to be free, Win Tin replied, "I will be happy only when all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi are released."

Nobel Peace Prize winner Suu Kyi has spent more than 12 of the past 19 years in detention, mostly under house arrest. In 1990, her party won a landslide victory that the junta refused to acknowledge. Instead, the regime stepped up arrests and repression of dissidents. Suu Kyi has called Win Tin "a man of courage and integrity" and said he was instrumental in Myanmar's democracy movement. Human rights groups rejoiced at his release. "We are immensely relieved that he has finally been freed," Reporters Without Borders said in a statement. "It is unacceptable that he was made to serve 19 years in prison for peacefully advocating democracy but today his release is an historic moment."

The amnesty granted to 9,002 prisoners around the country was believed to be one of the largest the junta has approved. It came days ahead of the first anniversary of the military junta's brutal crackdown on protests led by Buddhist monks. The UN estimated at least 31 people were killed when the army fired on peaceful protesters Sept. 26-27, sparking global outrage.

Analysts suspect the junta timed the release as an attempt to fend off international criticism on the anniversary. "I am certain that it is part of a political strategy," said Josef Silverstein, a retired Rutgers University professor and Myanmar expert. "The military did not come off well in attacking the monks last year and that attack has not been forgotten." The junta "is determined to get the world to forget and just take note of the military's 'favorable' action," he added.

Win Tin served as a close aide to Suu Kyi and helped found her National League for Democracy opposition party in 1988. He was arrested on July 4, 1989, along with other opposition politicians. Authorities initially kept him without food while interrogating him about his role in the democracy movement, Suu Kyi wrote in 1996 in a newspaper article.

Tried in a military court, he was sentenced to 14 years in prison for allegedly being a member of the banned Communist Party of Myanmar. He was most recently sentenced in 1996 to an additional seven years for writing to the United Nations about prison conditions and for writing and circulating anti-government pamphlets in prison.

Amnesty International called Win Tin's release "the best news to come out of Myanmar in a long time," but said the seven political prisoners "don't even represent one percent of the political prisoners there. There are many, many more who should also be released."

The United Nations and international rights groups had long called for Win Tin's release and referred to him as Myanmar's longest-serving political prisoner. State-controlled media said the amnesty was granted to prisoners who exhibited good "moral behavior." Analysts said the vast majority of the prisoners were likely petty criminals. The government often grants amnesty to people convicted of low-level crimes to mark important national days.

SCIENTISTS FIND THAT MEMORIES CAN BE ERASED

From an article on www.pressesc.com

Neuroscientists have discovered that long-term memories are not etched in a "clay tablet"-like stable form as once thought. The process is much more dynamic, involving a miniature molecular machine that must run constantly to keep memories going, and jamming this machine briefly can erase long-term memories.

The findings by Prof. Yadin Dudai, Head of the Weizmann Instituteís Neurobiology Department, which appeared today in the journal Science, may pave way for memory altering drugs in the future. Dudai and his team trained rats to avoid certain tastes and then injected a drug to block a specific protein into the taste cortex ñ an area of the brain associated with taste memory. They hypothesized, that this protein, an enzyme located in the synapses called PKMzeta, acts as a miniature memory machine that keeps memory up and running by changing some facets of the structure of synaptic contacts.

But it must be persistently active to maintain this change, which is brought about by learning. Silencing PKMzeta, reasoned the scientists, should reverse the change in the synapse. They proved their hypothesis by showing that regardless of the taste the rats were trained to avoid, they forget their learned aversion after a single application of the drug. The technique worked as successfully a month after the memories were formed, which is analogous to years in humans, and all signs so far indicate that the affected unpleasant memories of the taste had indeed disappeared.

This is the first time that memories in the brain were shown to be capable of erasure so long after their formation. This drug is a molecular version of jamming the operation of the machine, says Dudai. When the machine stops, the memories stop as well. In other words, long-term memory is not a one-time inscription on the nerve network, but an ongoing process which the brain must continuously fuel and maintain and these findings raise the possibility of developing a "memory eraser."

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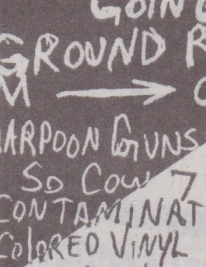

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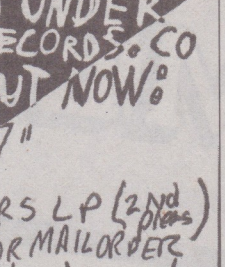

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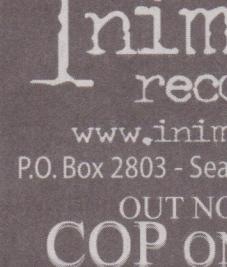

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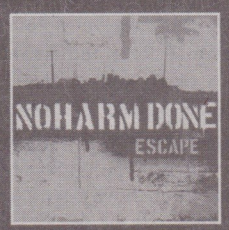

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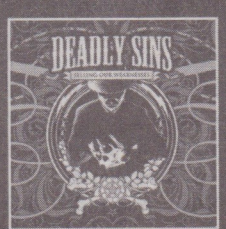

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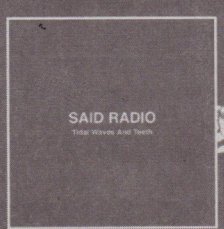

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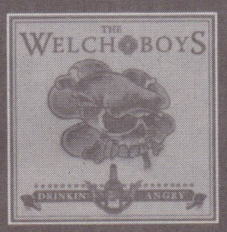

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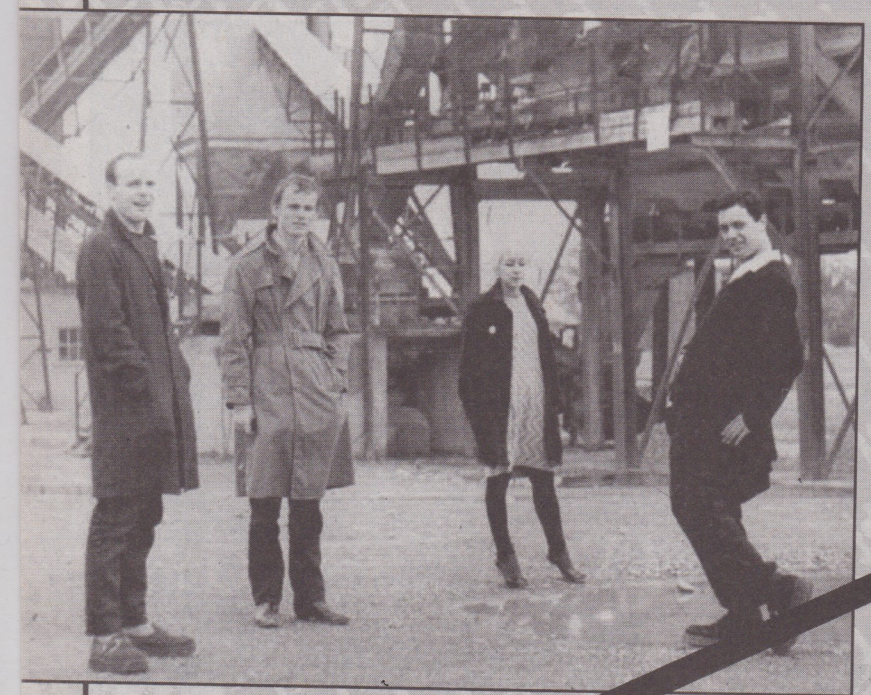
ANIMALS AND MEN

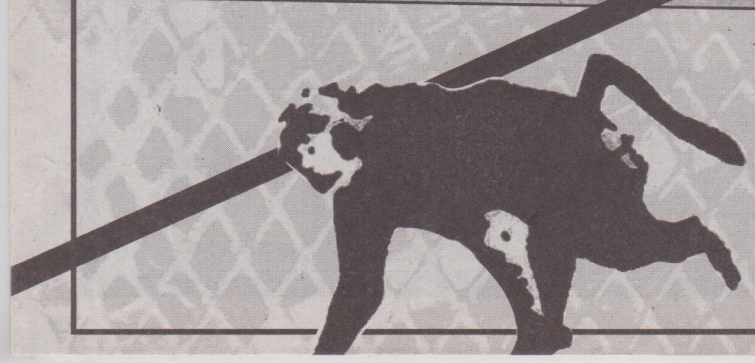
Dont misbehave in the NEWAGE

Animals and Men originally formed in the late '70s in Frome, England by primary members Sue Welles (vocals) and Ralph Mitchard (guitar). Having risen from the ashes of the media-blitzed punk phenomenon, Animals and Men was a part of a new wave of young, disillusioned outsiders that would turn the seeds of punk into a blossoming DIY approach to music, art, and living. As one of the first wave of kids to truly explore the musicianship and aesthetic of punk through post-punk, Animals and Men is undoubtedly an extremely influential group during an enormously creative and thriving period in music. I first discovered the group via Chuck Warner's indispensable Hyped2Death label in a nearby record shop in San Francisco. I had never heard of Animals and Men, and had only briefly seen the H2D/Messthetics series at a friend's. I picked up the Animals and Men disc because it looked punk—there was a really cool glossy, homemade-looking photo on the cover, and it'd been priced at a mere $3 since it was a CD-R. What was inside blew my mind! (And further, Chuck's extremely seductive, "If you're enjoying this CD, there are nearly 200 more DIY bands waiting for you..." No way!!!)

The first (of two) Animals and Men collections from H2D and its respective liner notes are the main resource for my knowledge on Animals and Men—and will be drawn upon in this conversation with Sue, which attempts to contextualize what it was like to establish an early post-punk band in England, to do so as a woman, and to explore their future as the recently reformed, Animals And Men.

Interview and introduction by Jess Scott





MRR: Animals and Men met at an Adam Ant/Wire show in the late '70s. But how did you know about those bands and how did you originally get into punk?
Sue: During the 1960s I lived near London, in Ware, Hertfordshire. All around me were beautiful fashionable people and pop music was great. I was a kid though, I felt left out—I could not wait to grow up! My first loves were fashion and music. I loved the girl singers, particularly Sandie Shaw, as well as pop groups like The Troggs, etc. As I hit my teenage years my parents moved back to the West of England (the countryside). I spent a lot of time feeling lonely and got into listening to music on the radio late at night. I would buy Marc Bolan (T. Rex) and Bowie records and listen to them again and again. I saw Bowie at Wembley (Stadium located outside of London) and was disappointed because he was so far away. A few weeks later I saw Doctors of Madness at Bath Pavilion—they put on such a great show. I was an instant fan; it felt great to be able to see the band close up and even talk to them! I was also into Roxy Music and had started to dress vintage. I'd had phases of wearing clothes from the 1920s and 1950s with dashes of Army chic thrown in, so when punk "arrived" it was more a case of realizing other people were also disillusioned with the (then) current state of music and fashion. Punk was a well-reported phenomenon. The music papers covered it even if they hated the bands, etc. By the time I met Ralph (Animals and Men guitarist) I was a punk music fan with a small collection of stuff I loved, and a few friends to go to gigs with. Ralph and I were often told of each other before we met, and we finally connected

in Bristol at that Adam Ant/Wire gig. I think we were the only ones that really liked that kind of stuff so we paired up. We hung out with Geoff (Norcott, bass) and Nigel (House, drums) who were friends of Ralph, and formed Animals and Men. Nigel was a student in London and had gotten a job at Rough Trade. Geoff was in the Royal Navy, but he was home most weekends. He also had a car, which enabled us to get around.

MRR: In the early years following the first (John Peel supported) single, "Don't Misbehave in the New Age/We Are Machines," you've mentioned a fairly turbulent line-up change of members (Royal Navy posts, side-projects, etc.)—and your "longtime mistrust of people who could really play." Why is this? Did you feel it would impact the band's dynamic or sound? Or was it a more ideological, punk-aesthetic conviction? What would it mean for Animals and Men to be able to "really play?"

Sue: For Animals and Men to "really play" would mean other people were doing the playing—it wouldn't be as it is meant to sound. We never considered ourselves to be musicians. Musicians were the posh kids from school, the ones who did music lessons, whose parents bought them instruments and who could play guitar solos to amaze. They always had great ideas but it sounded like everyone else. We always considered our music to be more inspired and original than that. We were trying to play music we wanted to hear. We listened to the Velvet Underground, the New York Dolls, the Doors, the Buzzcocks, X-Ray Spex, Human League, Penetration, Wire, Adam and the Ants, Warsaw/Joy Division, and The Monochrome Set. We were fan-boy punk music nerds before they had been invented. We took ourselves and our craft very seriously, but we were basically a bunch of music-loving loners with lots of ideas, dressing well, and hanging out together...

MRR: After the tumultuous Animals and Men period (which brought major labels sniffing, while simultaneously accruing financial debt) you unloaded everyone except Ralph and picked up two punk kids (Dave Mackay, bass, and Andy Payne, drums), renaming the group, Terraplanes. What were the major differences between the two groups? Did you feel it was an evolution of Animals and Men or a complete upheaval toward another direction?

Sue: People move on and grow up. Ralph and I were still working and living in Frome. It felt to us as though everyone else had moved on to New Romantic stuff, or Two Tone—which was great if you were into it, but we weren't. Nigel had met a new partner and had a life in London. We found life too hectic on our brief forays into the city. We enjoyed the gigs, but appreciated the calm and the quality of life in our country retreat. Geoff was in Gibraltar for the next 18 months. Ralph and I were looking for something new, and we thought we had found it in the punky, blues crossover-type thing of Terraplanes. We are still friends with Dave from those days and still appreciate his chauffeuring abilities for the odd gig (for instance, the New York Dolls at the Thekla Bristol).

MRR: Terraplanes has a much more blues-y sound (the harmonica outshining the guitar) and I'm aware that you guys met the late, great Bo Diddley and Screamin' Jay Hawkins. Can you expand on your musical influences outside of punk? What about currently—who have you picked up on since the original line-up days?

Sue: Ralph had a longtime love of blues music and quickly taught me that Marc Bolan was not the beginning of the story. By the time Terraplanes began we were into classic songwriting like Leiber and Stoller's work for the Coasters—and were attempting to emulate that style of writing. Blues combos from the '50s were also influential. In a way, some of the recent Detroit bands like the Dirtbombs and Detroit Cobras seem to be in that groove and we enjoy that sort of thing.

MRR: The general sense I get of the Animals and Men story is one that was straddling brushes with fame (nearly opening for Adam Ant and being taken on by his would-be publishing company), while remaining doggedly DIY. For instance, changing your name and songs only to result in John Peel not returning your phone calls, might inspire some groups to regress and mine the previous method for a route to "success." Why didn't you do this? Did you ever consider it?

Sue: History should write down that we were cowards, that we were shy and

scared. We never dared to be. It never felt as if there was a possibility of turning around and going back. Things felt as if they moved fast, we were young but felt quite grown up at 21. We were trying to be great in a classical way rather than trying to be avant-garde.

MRR: Touching on the subject of "scenes"—Animals and Men also seemed to be an anomaly in terms of the usual punk scene-fostered band. You paint your hometown of Frome, Somerset to be rather lacking in a real "scene"—a relatively small but efficient way to nurture bands during the same period in Brighton, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, and the US's Athens, D.C., Pacific Northwest, etc. Can you expand on why you seemed to be under-the-radar even inside the underground?

Sue: We were unusual in that we were driven by a desire to be great—rather than wanting to be popular. Frome is a weird place, but is now in fact quite trendy. We feel quite happy in a sense because we did show other bands that you could be on the radio and have records out just by playing what you wanted to play. Our friends have been inspired to reach further, and younger generations who've been influenced by us have spawned some great bands. Specifically, there are the local groups, Ozric Tentacles and Eat Static.

MRR: You guys seemed to lack that underground network, and yet had connections with Peel and Adam Ant—why was Animals and Men so isolated and yet being offered Peel Sessions? For instance, why didn't you fit in with the other bands that ended up on the Hyped2Death series?

Sue: Well, even though we had no audience to speak of we kept in mind that Blues men from the past had been discovered later on... and the (influential off-beat '60s garage series) *Nuggets* bands were also surfacing later on. We felt that in the greater picture people might notice us! We were using the virtual world of the radio to get our music heard and sell records. We also wrote to people and sent off tapes of our latest stuff. We were very introverted, so although we made great effort to attend gigs we often were too shy to talk to the other people in bands—let alone say we had a band too. Also we did very few gigs because we were unwilling to compromise about our resistance to play the pub circuit. Additionally, we all worked and had to practice or record on weekends or holidays. Coming from Somerset we were outsiders in terms of the music scene. Nearly all our favorite bands sold out and made awful records as part of a move to be more popular—something we hated. Seeing bands lose their charm or their bite to sell to the mainstream was par for the course. We didn't consider ourselves to be a part of the underground—we still had boring jobs, lived in a small town and had fairly traditional lives.

MRR: I've read that (at least originally) you were staunchly anti-car and that none of the members drove (note: Terraplanes being an early car model). This seems sort of cool and easily conjures up the like-mindedness of the Desperate Bicycles. Yet, Animals and Men didn't seem overtly political in the context of bands of the same period (Gang of Four, or even Crass). Can you expand on this?

Sue: We walk our talk... quite literally! We still do not have a car or use bus transport. We are anti-car in the sense that socially they have tied people to false idols, which ultimately harm us all. While it makes life hard, we feel you have to be true to yourself and do what you believe to be right. Mostly we just don't go anywhere much. We shop in our local co-operative supermarket, where they deliver to our back door, etc.

MRR: Drawing from these social situations in England (and generally) at the time, the late '70s/'80s was a much more homogenized and limited place for women, and for women in punk. You very aptly mention the major labels sniffing for the new "poppy Banshees" as well as the journalist from *Sounds* offering to spotlight the band if you did "something sexy." How did this disenchant you and the band from engaging with the mainstream? What did it really feel like to be into punk while the well-known women in punk were musically trailblazing but still doing

"something sexy"–i.e. Debbie Harry, Siouxsie, etc.?
Sue: I was awfully skinny, and besides, we felt it detracted from the idea that we were about the music. We also felt (and still feel) that often having a girl singer invites notions of "fall in love with me, I'm sexy and available." I did not want that kind of attention and Ralph fully supported me. I was never pushed to play those games. It was disenchanting–everyone was looking to exploit us in some way or other and it put us off a great deal. We began to think everyone in pop was a cretin. (Even our hero Adam Ant disappointed us in that way.) Our impression was that it was either put up or shut up, and we took the latter route. We were more aware of, and involved in, class politics rather than gender politics–although I have always considered myself equal and had a very non-gender specific upbringing. I had had jobs that were not traditionally female jobs, so although I experienced exploitation (i.e. got less pay), I was also generally treated with respect for what I could do. It was like that in the band too. Actually, I don't think we saw Animals and Men as being a girl-fronted band in the early stages. But of course we were and people noticed.

MRR: How aware/connected were you to other women in the underground? One might lump you on a mix tape with the Raincoats, the Slits, Stef Petticoat, Kleenex, Bound and Gagged, Y Pants, Essential Logic, or Chalk Circle, but did this seem a part of your reality at the time?
Sue: At the time yes I was aware but not fully...

MRR: Can you elaborate a little? How did you know, and why not "fully?" To punk/women today there seems to be a common sound or aesthetic between Animals and Men and these groups. But did you feel like that? Or were they as distant to you artistically as... Blondie, say. (That's kind of a joke...) A lot of these groups were coming through Rough Trade (and your former bandmate working there)–did that help you make connections?
Sue: We liked the early Slits but they weren't our favorites. Kleenex we really liked. We bought the debut singles of the Raincoats and Essential Logic. We also liked X-Ray Spex a lot. We had the Avengers first EP–"Car Crash," we loved in particular. We never met anyone–apart from when we supported Toyah, who was a total horror. We loved Snatch (Patti Palladin and Judy Nylon) and were pretty influenced by them. I would have to say that the whole Rough Trade thing was not sympathetic to us. Once Nigel (our former bass player) started working there he was like, "don't bother me I've moved on. You're my past–don't embarrass me at my new job," rather than some sort of aid to success. We thought (Rough Trade) were all from privileged backgrounds. We were just unpretentious hicks with blue-collar jobs–what did we know? Despite being in boring jobs, we were quite rebellious as people and if we thought we weren't wanted we were like, "OK fuck you then." With the door at Rough Trade closed and John Peel not liking the (Terraplanes') "Evil Going On" single, we felt we had no options as an indie band. So we went into the orbit of Adam Ant who was going to make us stars. He sort of saw us as pop-beatnik types and promised us the Earth–which eventually we turned down. It seemed a horrible way to earn your living, selling a cartoon version of yourself.

MRR: Why did you reform as Animals and Men? Why not the later incarnations of the group? What is the same or different?
Sue: We reformed as Animals and Men because it felt right. Also there was another band called The Terraplanes (possibly from the US?) who came later but had more success.
MRR: I've read that your kids play in the new Animals and Men!

That's so cool–what is it like? How old are they and what sort of music are they into?
Sue: They have, but at the moment they don't. Celia Jade and her partner, James, have been practicing on the violin. So never say never! Our eldest, Bea, is 24 and lives with us and works in a toyshop. Redmond is the youngest and is off to University this year. They are great DJ's but have their own tastes, which sometimes coincides with ours.

MRR: What is the current plan for Animals and Men? New songs? A tour?
Sue: In 2004, we had a full line-up and recorded a cover of "Nag Nag Nag" for a compilation. Soon thereafter we ended up as just Ralph, Geoff, and I. We eventually found MySpace and got connected with Boz (who lives near Frome) and is now on bass. Rach plays a bit of screechy violin. Geoff has departed from the group now. Boz got his mate, Merv, on drums and now we are ready to go! We have a vinyl LP coming out on Mississippi Records in November called, *Never Bought Never Sold*. It'll include some old songs. We also have a new single planned for Convulsive Records in New York–which we will be recording really soon.

MRR: Last thoughts?
Sue: Looking back is difficult as your questions revive memories, seeking reevaluation of things that happened long ago in the earnest youth times of our life. People did not understand us then... do they now? We were outsiders then and we are still outsiders. We just do not fit into neat boxes. We were not made to–we were trying to create some music to feel proud of.

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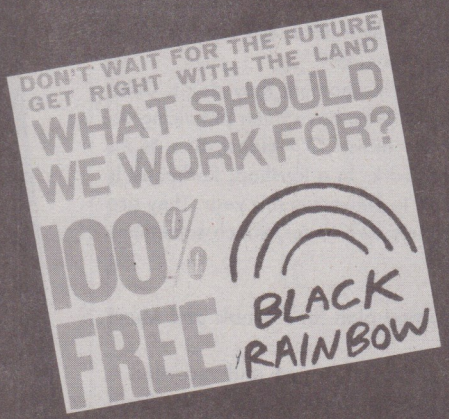

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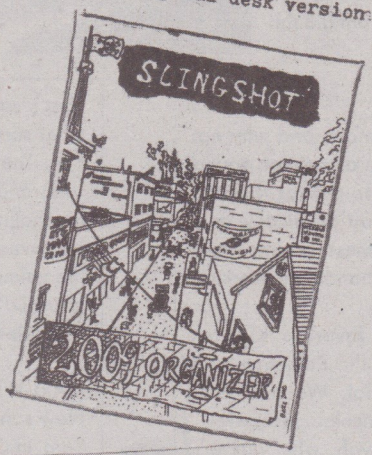

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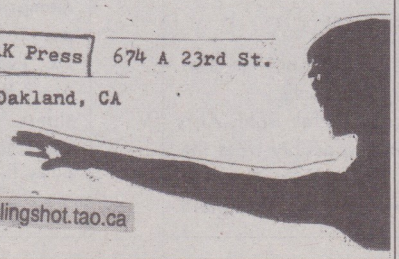

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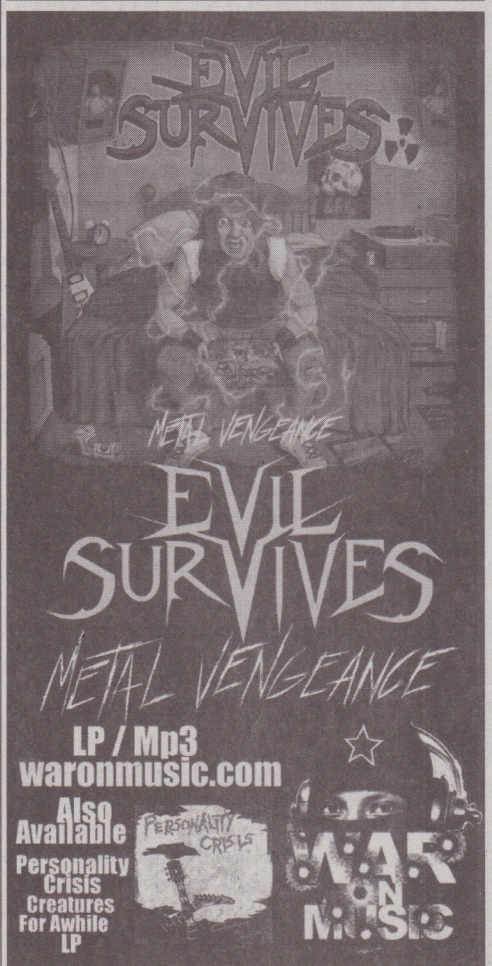

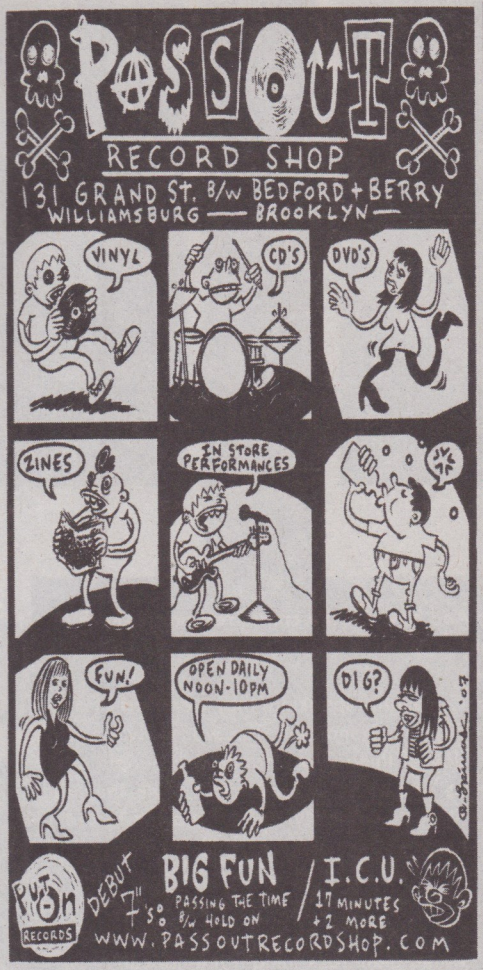
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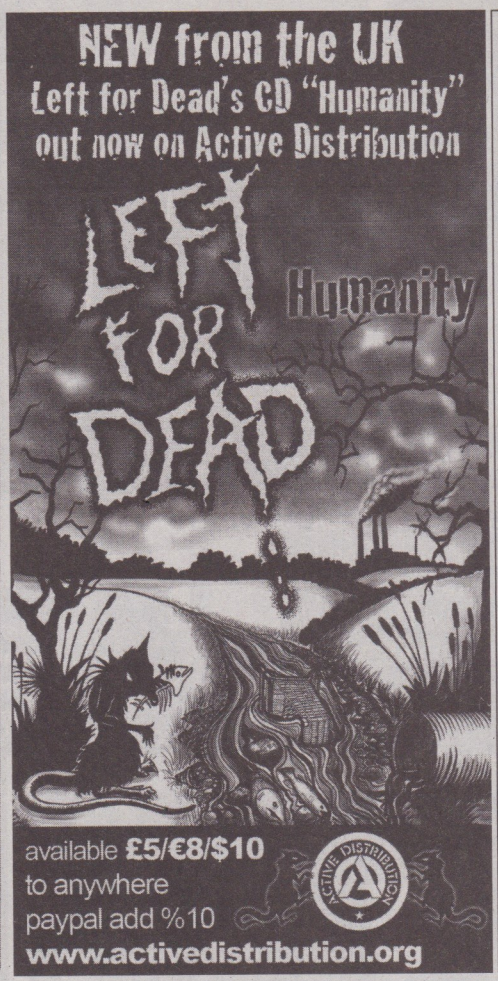
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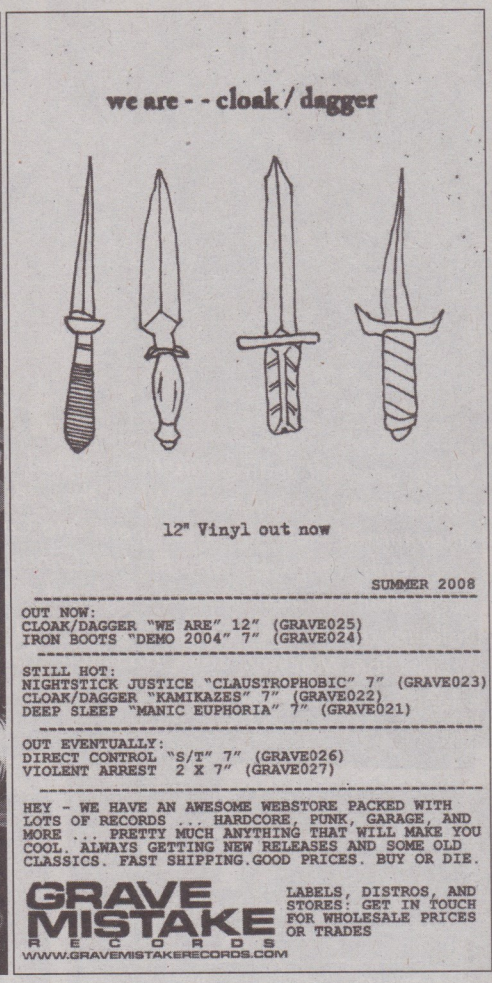
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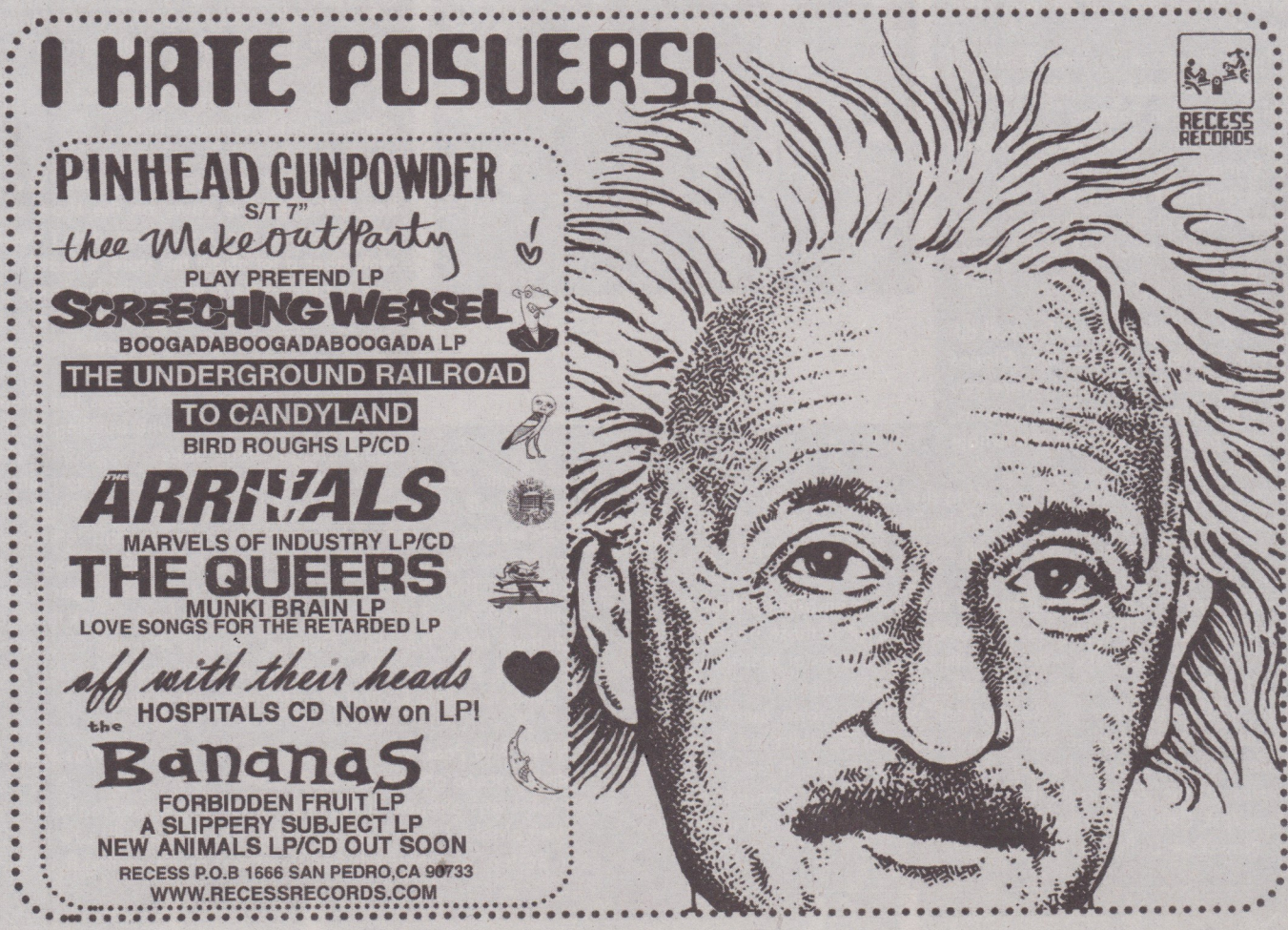
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The Diodes

Here are four individuals that started the Toronto punk scene from ground zero. When they couldn't find a club they turned their rehearsal space into Canada's first punk rock club. They were also the first Canadian punk band to sign an international record deal and release four brilliant albums and had a handful of great singles. I'd like to welcome Ian Mackay, John Hamilton, Paul Robinson, and John Catto, otherwise known as the Diodes.

Interview conducted by Greg Dick

Photos by Ralph Alfonso

MRR: Where are you all from originally?
John H: I'm from Toronto. Born and raised. Grew up in Scarborough.
Ian: I started in Sarnia.
John C: Born in Birmingham. Moved to Canada in '67. Been here ever since and back to London.
Paul: I was born in Boston. Then moved to Montreal and then Toronto in 1976.

MRR: So, you guys came from all different corners. Before the Diodes formed, what kind of music were you guys into back in your early teens, before punk started and the whole O.C.A. thing?
John C: The dates here, we're talking the early '70s—1972, 1973. I was listening to, initially, things like the first Stooges album, Bowie, T-Rex, Mott The Hoople, Queen, all of that. A glam rock kid.

MRR: There was a lot of that kind of stuff going on around then. It was really great. Did you guys go and see a lot of those bands?
John C: I saw everyone who came through Toronto at that time. I saw the Dolls. There was a bunch of different venues. Most things then would be either at Massey Hall or the Victoria Burlesque Theatre down at Spadina and Dundas. So, Massey Hall I saw T-Rex there, I saw Lou Reed there, I saw Mott The Hoople there, I saw Sparks. At the Victoria Burlesque Theatre, I saw the Stooges, the New York Dolls, Silverhead, Rush's first gig. They opened up for the New York Dolls.

MRR: And how did the crowd respond to Rush that night? That's two different ends of the spectrum, there.
John C: Roughly speaking, they were sort of a Led Zeppelin band then. This was early on in the day of things, so I don't think people acted as negatively as you might think they did. Not as negatively as they reacted to seeing Kansas open up for Mott The Hoople.

MRR: So were you dressing the part? Did you have the Master John boots and the whole glam rock thing... the haircut?
John C: Yeah. Well, I didn't have any Master John stuff, but I bought everything from Long John's, which was John Gibson's old shop up on Yonge Street. Lots of English rock 'n' roll clothes—the hand made shoes...

MRR: And tell me about Long John. We've had a few people come on the show who had forgotten the name and didn't really remember a lot about the store. I heard that was a place where you could basically go full tilt and get your velvet jackets and your flares, etc. And I heard they shared the same space as Master John.
John C: Master John was across the street. Master John was over in the building on the upper end of Yonge Street. Long John's was on a little side street. It had a big cartoon of a pirate painted on the wall. It was run by John Gibb, but it was Chris Gibb, who was his cousin, who ended up in the Deserters and John Gibb was in the Battered Wives. They brought a lot of stuff over from England. They had shoes made here and it was proper Faces-style rock 'n' roll pirate shoes with the little heel. I think they got clothes from Paradise Garage, maybe Phenal Casara in England, you know. They had the mothball and Ty jackets. And I guess they knocked off a certain amount of stuff.

MRR: And Paul, you were in Boston at this time. Was there a similar scene going on there?
Paul: I was already in Montreal when everything really broke. Well alright, I'll go back to Boston. The first band I saw in '72, in Boston, was the Dolls and there was an interesting thing that

happened in Boston with a lot of new bands coming and just started to invent themselves. People like Jonathan Richman. People like Willie "Boom Boom" Alexander. And a lot of bands were coming through Boston at the time there was quite a good club scene.

MRR: Yes. And you must have seen the Real Kids.
Paul: I saw them but they were later. They were contemporaries of the Diodes. They weren't around when I was in high school. AEROSMITH was around in high school. Bands like that.

Being interviewed by Wendy O Williams @ Max's Kansas City, NY 1977

MRR: Did you see Aerosmith back then?
Paul: I did. They actually played at my high school. They played a school dance.
John C: Don't you have a story about that, about hitch hiking?
Paul: Yeah. I was hitch hiking in Boston and this band picked us up. They said, "hey we're in this band called Aerosmith." And I had seen them at high school and I was like, "Oh God, that band?" They were just uncool because this was at the time of the New York Dolls, and look at what happened to them.
John H: Where did Cyrinda Fox end up?

MRR: Yeah, Cyrinda Fox would have been hanging around with them for sure. You must have been aware of the presence of J Geils and bands like that. Thunder Train.
Paul: J Geils was the biggest band in Boston at the time.
John H: You're forgetting Foghat.

MRR: I thought Foghat were from England?
John C: They are English, yeah, but they were always on *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*.
Paul: Yeah, but the Boston bands... Definitely J Geils were the biggest.

MRR: And Paul, why did you originally choose Montreal to study before coming to Toronto?
Paul: You want the real answer for this?

MRR: I do.
Paul: The Vietnam War. The bottom line is that I was 19 when they were drafting people into the Vietnam War and my parents thought it was a good idea that I moved up to Canada, which is why I went to Concordia University.

MRR: That is a good reason. Why did you eventually leave Montreal and then come to Toronto?
Paul: I finished university at Concordia and I came to graduate school at York University.

MRR: Did you ever see the band DMZ from Boston?
Paul: Yeah, sure, but they were later. Again, they were contemporaries of the Real Kids.

MRR: What bands were you guys in before the Diodes?
Paul: I think John Hamilton is the only one that can speak here.
John H: Well, I started quite young actually. I am a bit older then the other guys in the band by about four or five years. I started playing in bands regularly about 1966 when there was a non-union scene and I was in high school. We worked every weekend. I had a little R&B band called Sermon, and we were under the influence of The Rogues, which later evolved into Mandala. At that point there was a really interesting... what was called "race radio" station out of Buffalo, called WAFL, which played black music, and it was usually independent black music. Very obscure singles like Dyke and the Blazers, and people like that so there was a very strong R&B influence in Toronto at that point. So, I was playing around in those kinds of bands in high school every weekend, picking up, actually, not bad money—I don't know, $30 or $40 every weekend. I was doing that for about ten years before I joined the Diodes.

MRR: And you were playing drums?
John H: Yes. I was playing drums then.

MRR: And you were also in a band called Zoom. Can you tell me about Zoom?
John H: Zoom was with Chris Hate, who eventually became the bass player in the Viletones. Chris and I had grown up together. He was the other guy in all the bands that I was playing in back around 1966. We had been playing together and breaking up, and playing together and breaking up over the years, numerous times, and Zoom sort of came together somewhat under the influence of The Ramones. We were like the tail end of a glam band, but with a bit of a punk influence. Actually, I think we released the first independent single in Toronto.

MRR: And that was "Sweet Desperation."
John H: Yeah, and "Massacre at Central High," but Chris Hate and I both realized that that band was really not the right mix, so we re-shaped ourselves and Chris joined the Viletones and I joined the Diodes, and I think it was the best move that either of us ever made.

MRR: And what year did that single come out?
John H: That probably would have been the tail end of '76 or the really early part of '77.

MRR: Did you guys press a lot of copies?
John H: I think we pressed 1,000. That was all that was ever pressed.

MRR: My understanding of the earliest version of the Diodes stems from the bands the Country Lads and the Eels. Can you tell me about this band?
Ian: I can tell you about the Eels. The Eels were comprised of David Clarkson, Harry Palm who went on to do the G-Rays. I was the soundman and Bent Rasmussen was the drummer—a concept band really. The idea behind the Eels, originally, was to take a pop element like a rock band and create a sound-sculpture wall-of-noise product. That's what we were actually trying to accomplish.
Paul: That's not pretentious, is it Ian?
Ian: Absolutely pretentious. So we ended up liking the music so much that the concept quickly fell away and we just enjoyed seeing the guys performing up on stage.

MRR: Did they do a lot of gigs?
Ian: One gig.

MRR: That was it and you were the manager.
Ian: I was the soundman, manager, production assistant, roadie... and I had a nice blue fluffer—a really nice blue polyester suit to go with it.

MRR: Harry was the singer in that band and

he went on to play in the G-Rays and I heard he wore the Marilyn Monroe T-shirt with the cut off sleeves for that show. Now you and Harry had a house down by Trinity Bellwoods Park, what did you nickname the place?
Ian: Well, it was Art's photo studio, and what we started with Dave Clarkson, was a little scene called Radiation Ranch, and we bought stamps and stamped everything we did... all the lyric sheets we wrote. We walked around Queen Street wearing red Furshingler gloves. That's all we would wear. It was quite silly really. It was a pure concept idea. We wanted to have a pop idea. Listening to The Ramones, having a great time playing music, and then we ran into these guys and things changed.

MRR: Now the Country Lads, that was Bob Rogers, Carl Finkel, and Johnny McLoud. I guess after that gig, at some point Johnny met Harry at O.C.A. around '76 and formed the G-Rays. This would have been the time when John Catto and Paul Robinson formed a band with Bent Rasmussen and Dave Clarkson, would that have been the Diodes, or was that a different band?
Ian: We didn't really have a name.
Paul: No, no, no. I think, basically, Ian certainly became a part of that band immediately. Ian and Dave Clarkson approached me to be their singer.

MRR: How long did this incarnation last?
John C: Was this the one with David Clarkson and Bent?
Ian: For about four months.
John C: It lasted from October until...
Ian: April of '77.
John C: Yeah, because we played the Colonial with that line up. We played the Beaux Arts Ball. We played the 3-D show...

MRR: So that was the Diodes then?
Paul: We were called the Diodes instantly. As of October '76 we were called the Diodes.
John H: And you all had funny names like Laser Burns and stuff.
Paul: Paul Are.
Ian: Who was Laser Buns? John?
John C: That was me.
Paul: What was David Clarkson? Yeah, we did have funny names. There was like a fanzine that we had put together.
John C: He was called, like, Teddy Buoys or something.

MRR: And so at this point you guys were all in O.C.A. Rodney Bowes the photographer was responsible for coming up with the name.
Ian: Rodney and I went to high school together. Rodney introduced me to T-Rex and Slade. He was from the UK, so he was a very positive influence on me. Not to mention the trouble we got in. Rodney followed me to O.C.A. and we were good buddies at that time and he was the one who coined the name.

MRR: At what point did John enter the band, and how did you meet John Hamilton?
Ian: We met John through Bent and John could probably tell that story better.
John H: Bent had been my drummer, actually, when I was at the *Daily Planet* at the Beverley from '74 to '76, and I was in Zoom, and Zoom was booking the Colonial Underground, so I had seen the Diodes play. And actually, Steven Davey from the Dishes had been the initial contact. They phoned me up and said that the Diodes were looking for a drummer.
John C: Yeah, but I think we had met you lots of times before that.
John H: Yeah. We had sort of seen each other around.
John C: I can remember going to a Viletones rehearsal with you way before you were in the band.
John H: Right. That's probably true because we were banging out with the Viletones in an earlier incarnation.

MRR: And tell me about John Corvette.
John C: John was married to Martha Johnson, who eventually ended up in Martha and the Muffins. Back in the early days, this punk period of O.C.A., things would go on at O.C.A. where one of a variety of bands would do stuff. They were mostly art kind of bands. There was a band called Oh Those Pants. There was the Doncasters. John Corvette was a part of all those things. All of these people were not from O.C.A. None of them went there. For some reason, they had some link there. I think it was Owen wasn't it?
Ian: Yeah. At the Ontario College of Art, there was a whole Thornhill contingent attending and they had friends who came and played.
John C: For some reason all their friends got these gigs.
Ian: They got these gigs. They probably controlled S.A.C.
John C: They did the thing the year before we did. We were in control. Whoever that Thornhill link was, had got all their bands in so there was Oh Those Pants. There was the Doncasters, and so on and so forth.
Ian: And John McLoud was associated with that crowd. So he might have been the link because he was already downtown doing his country thing.
John H: John Corvette and I auditioned the same night for you guys right? He was brand new back then. They just lost David Clarkson and Bent had just left. John Corvette and I came down to the CEAC (Centre For Experimental Arts and Communication), which would become the Crash 'n' Burn, and we auditioned that night.

MRR: So, John Corvette would have been in the Diodes before the Cads?
Ian: Yeah.

MRR: Now Ian and John Catto, and I guess, John Hamilton, you guys met Paul at a party. Can you tell me about this? Is this the first time you had met him?
Ian: That is a bit of a mixed memory because we were comparing it the other day. My memory is that Paul was doing his graduate work at York University and had brought Anthony Karow to speak at O.C.A. and I met him after that. Another memory is that we met at one of John Catto's openings. The link up was at one of John Catto's openings. The link up was art related, but more importantly, somebody was blasting Ramones out of some kind of a tape player. I think it was Paul and so we ran up to him and said "You're the only person we've met so far who actually knows about this band and isn't this so cool." Instantly this created a sort of blood relation right away. A soulmate.

MRR: So he was carrying a boom box with him?
Paul: My Norelco boom box.
John C: I should mention that, despite the fact that this might have been at my painting show, I didn't really meet Paul then. I actual-

ly met him at a rehearsal when they were falling apart.

Paul: I think what Ian mentioned is probably right. That I met Ian and Dave Clarkson at a talk for Anthony Karow, which I went to, and I think it was Ian that invited me to this art opening which happened to be George Wideside and John Catto's art opening. And it was either that night or the following night and I went to the party and that's where I brought the Ramones thing on my Norelco cassette player, which was the prototype of a cassette player. I was playing The Ramones walking around and I guess everyone thought that was the coolest thing they had ever seen and that's why I was invited into the band.

MRR: And George Whiteside went on to become a famous fashion photographer and he actually did the photography on your third LP. Speaking of photography, can you tell me about Carol Starr?

Paul: Carol Star was my girlfriend. Carol was another student at York University when I was in graduate school and I kind of introduced her to the whole scene and then she ended up leaving Toronto right after the Crash 'n' Burn and she moved to England and was Phil Lynott's girlfriend, basically.

MRR: Were any of you present that evening when the incident occurred with Mike Nightmare? I've heard variations. I've heard that Mike was basically taken out because Phil had a bodyguard.

Paul: Mike, who was Irish, went up to him and said "How are you doing, you Irish git?" or some comment, and Phil took it the wrong way and felt he was making an anti-Irish comment and completely pounded the guy.

MRR: And Mike Nightmare's real last name was Mulroney, so he was a true Irishman. Where and when did you guys meet Ralph Alfonso?

Paul: I'm the one who met Ralph originally.

Ian: It was around the Crash 'n' Burn.

John C: It was before the Crash 'n' Burn. It was either at the first Viletones gig, I think, or maybe at O.C.A. before that.

Paul: He got my telephone number at one of the gigs and rang me. He was trying to do an article or something because he was a journalist right? So he was writing an article. He rang me up and I ended up talking to him for hours on the phone, and at that point, I convinced him to be our manager and about coming down to our rehearsal space.

Ian: I remember Ralph being there way early photographing us a lot saying "No, that's not right. Do that button up. Take that off."

MRR: While attending O.C.A. there were school trips to New York City. What do you remember of these excursions? Was it all about educating yourselves in the art gallery, or was there extra curricular activities going on?

Paul: I'll tell it because it's my favorite Ian story.

John C: I'll do the lead in.

Ian: You could still be sued for that window, so be careful of what you say.

Paul: I don't think they can sue you after 30 years.

John C: This would be the second of the O.C.A. trips that I went on. Paul, by this point had appeared at O.C.A. and was hanging around and he smuggled himself onto the bus. He tucked himself up on the baggage rack.

Ian: I think that was Harri we smuggled, because Harri didn't have any money.

John C: Well, it was only O.C.A. students, so Paul was definitely smuggled.

Ian: Paul enjoyed a comfortable seat, so, I'm pretty sure he managed to get on but he might have been smuggled down with a US passport.

John C: So, Paul arrives in New York twelve hours later, this is 1976...

Ian: One thing we did do is we went to CBGB's and we saw the most amazing concert by Television I have ever seen in my life. I was just amazed by the band.

Paul: This is an incredible story. Not to mention we had our original demo tape already, produced by Mark Gain, and we were touting that around New York. God knows what reason John and I approached Danny Fields with it at his flat and we played it for him and we gave him our original fanzine. By the way, Danny Fields is the original manager of the Ramones...

MRR: ...and the STOOGES.

Paul: ...and the Doors.

John C: Having said that, I met Danny Fields in '76 when Rob and I went to interview The Ramones. Rob Sikora and I did a magazine at O.C.A. and we interviewed the Ramones for that. We interviewed Danny Fields as well. He was there at the gig at the New Yorker.

Paul: This is how we got to Danny Fields's apartment. There is no doubt about that.

MRR: That could have been a dangerous place to be.

Paul: It could have been, but it wasn't. You mean for 19-year-old boys? It was a non-starter. We met the people from *Rock Scene Magazine*.

MRR: Lisa Robinson and Richard Robinson.

Paul: Then we ended up, Ian, John, and I, with Danny Fields and Bob Resnick and Lisa Robinson and Seymour Stein. We ended up having dinner with them at a place called the Ocean Club. We were at the Ocean Club and there was a band on called the Feelies and we are sitting at a table with John Cale, and for some reason, John Cale just had a go at me. I mean, the guy just devastated me. I told him that I love all the things that he has done and he was just on my case. It was just unbelievable.

MRR: John was known to have a few too many drinks. Did anything ever transpire from knowing Danny Fields?

Paul: I think we eventually ended up in *Rock Scene*.

John C: That was nothing to do with the Danny Fields thing, but you haven't told the actual story that you started leading in here.

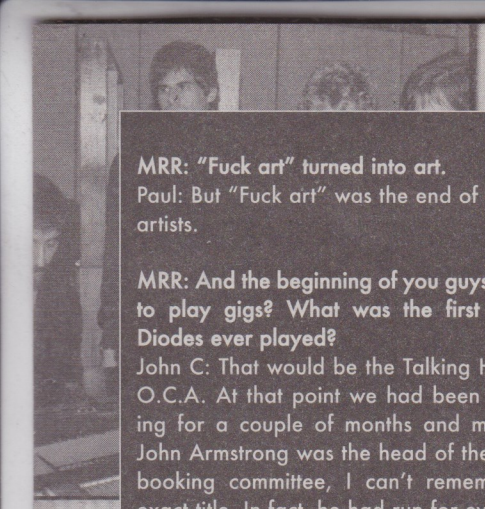
Paul: What was it? You can finish it.

John C: Actually, I wasn't there.

Paul: Oh right. Ian got completely pissed, he was so drunk, legless-ly drunk. We ended up walking around Soho on West Broadway and we are looking at all the art galleries—there weren't that many art galleries at the time just a handful of them—but there was the Leo Castelli gallery, which was one of the major galleries of pop art. I mean, he was Warhol's dealer and Lichenstein's dealer and Robert Rauschenberg's dealer. Ian looked at it and went, "Fuck art. Fuck art." And then picked up a brick and threw it through the window of the Leo Castelli gallery. Then picked up another one and threw it through the window at the Sodenburgh gallery, which was the gallery next door. And we're just going "Ian, what are you doing?" And he's just going "Fuck art."

Ian: Actually, Paul was cheering me on the whole time and before we did that we actually went into a number of clubs and Paul and I were chanting "Fuck art" into the clubs and people were looking at us, wondering, "what are you saying?" I guess at that point we decided we weren't going to be artists. We were going to be musicians instead. After that I had an exhibition about that where I projected a brick through a piece of glass at my spring exhibition and had a cassette player where you'd hear a brick smash glass and John Massey thought it was one of the most brilliant pieces that I had done, but what an inspiration to get there.

Paul: I think it was a great work of art, but even better, this is obscure and a bit away from punk rock, but the next day we went back down to see the damage done and they had boarded up the window of the Castelli gallery and they had used a Robert Rauschenberg crate and it was signed and I thought that was so appropriate. Boarded up the hole with the Roschenburg design.



MRR: "Fuck art" turned into art.
Paul: But "Fuck art" was the end of us being artists.

MRR: And the beginning of you guys starting to play gigs? What was the first gig the Diodes ever played?
John C: That would be the Talking Heads at O.C.A. At that point we had been rehearsing for a couple of months and my friend John Armstrong was the head of the student booking committee, I can't remember the exact title. In fact, he had run for everything that no one could be bothered to do, but John had gone through these things and so he booked. We said that we should get a gig and see that the Talking Heads are playing A Space, which is like a small art gallery.

MRR: So that wasn't part of O.C.A?
John C: Not connected at all.
Ian: A Space was up at Yonge and Bloor.
John C: It was a really little gallery. We got in touch with their management and we've got this thing, there is a big hall and an art college, they'll love you, all this stuff. We'll set it all up. We'll pay you money. They said "Yeah, great." So the Talking Heads came down and played A Space and then the next night they played O.C.A. and that was our first gig because we booked them so we had somewhere to play.

MRR: Paul, you told Johnny Black of CBS in 1978, "My sister was a hippie. I was too young for that. A couple of months after we formed, we started reading about the new English bands the Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Damned... I always thought like I do." This was probably reflective of the time of your first gigs and I guess the scene was pretty small at the time. You started realizing that there was more happening in other places.
Paul: Could you repeat the question?

MRR: At some point you must have felt a little alienated being a part of a punk band when you started realizing that there were bands coming out of other major cities. You realized that you weren't the only person that was into this kind of stuff.
Paul: I think that the Diodes were very aware of everything that was around them and very aware of the context that they belonged to. We were never a contrived band. We were always interested in what was going on at the same time.

MRR: Were you guys more inspired by American music or British music?
Ian: I think it was a combination of both. Let's not forget that John Hamilton had already had six or seven years of Canadian music experience. John Catto had experience going down and seeing bands and looking at what was going on, so we brought a lot of Canadian elements to it. I think some of the source and inspiration came from New York and London. We thought Canada was an interesting place to be because we were melding both experiences together. A lot of the bands had dual influences, whereas those countries had their own scenes.
Paul: You've got to also put into the context of what was out there for us to hear. So when the Diodes formed, the albums that were out there... there was Patti Smith's first album, there was the Ramones' first album, later on by the autumn "Anarchy in the UK" had come out. There were a couple of singles filtering through. Generation X. The Damned.
John C: The Damned was the first English single to do anything.

MRR: I think they also put out the first full length with *Damned Damned Damned*. Did you guys get hassled much for looking different from the average Torontonian back then?
Paul: People used to constantly yell at me as I walked down the road "Hey Elvis," because that is what they thought a black leather jacket and a guy with spikey quaffed hair was supposed to be into.
John C: I lived in Etobicoke so I got lots of it. I would be on the bus going home late at night and it would get very strange.

MRR: Tell me about the 3-D show on February 18th, 1977 with the Diodes, the Doncasters, and the Dishes.
John C: Well that's our second gig.
Paul: I think it was the Dishes, the Diodes, and the Doncasters, because the Dishes headlined it.
John C: Diodes, Dishes, Doncasters.
Paul: No, Dishes, Diodes, Doncasters.
John C: In order of appearance, yeah. The Dishes definitely headlined it. It was Steven Davey's idea. We would control the booking at this point at O.C.A. and the Dishes wanted to play there. Steven said, "Oh, wouldn't it be fun to do a gig where every band has the same first initial? Yeah, that will do. We need another gig."
Paul: I think in between there was a gig that the Dishes did at the Roxy Cinema.
John C: That's right. Was that in between?
Paul: I think it was because they played the gig where the opening act was the film *West Side Story* and the Dishes came out and I think *West Side Story* was still being projected over them whilst they played the gig.
John C: To be honest, I think that's later. I think that happened around the Crash 'n' Burn.
Paul: No. I think it's before then. The Viletones were there because I remember Ian and I running down the road and the Viletones having this pretend fight in the middle of the road.

MRR: Did you guys know Anya Varda at O.C.A.?
Ian: I think we met her at the Peter Pan.
Paul: Where did you meet Anya? We knew her from the St. Charles when she was a fag hag. That's where I first saw her.

MRR: Yeah, she was around a lot back then. When the Dishes would sing "Farrah no" she would be the one up on stage.
Paul: That was later though. I mean we met Anya way back. Lucasta and Xenia, and all of those girls that hung around the pre-punk glam scene.
John C: All of them were around the first gigs that we did and they were all around at the Stooges gig and the New York Dolls gig that I saw earlier—the '72-'73 gigs. Lucasta was there. Xenia was there. Anya was there. Deborah Cadabra was there. They were all there. That was a big link. It was all the same people.
Paul: The song "Plastic Girls" we wrote for them.
John C: Well, for Lucasta actually. Did you know that?
Ian: "They don't brave daylight unmade up. They have forgotten their own names for today. Their vinyl clothes are hot, but they don't care. They don't care because they are just part of the scene and I need that new breed of girl." Great lyrics, John.
Paul: Yup. That's a winner.

MRR: Tell me about finding your rehearsal space on Duncan Street.
Ian: At the end of our third year at the Ontario College of Art we had a loose association with the Centre for Experimental Art and Communication, which had the top floor and the basement floor at the building on Duncan and Pearl. We were able to use the space to prepare for our final performance video art show critiques of the year and stage an exhibition there and David Clarkson did a few video pieces. I did a few video pieces. We did a performance together. And Harri Palm had his stuff there. And shortly after that we saw that the basement space was available. I think at the same time we were being kicked out or evicted from the Brink's Building in the Annex, so, at that point it was John Hamilton who suggested, "This would be a great space to rehearse," and so we started to rehearse.
John C: I think there is a much shorter version of this that the CEAC people effectively contacted. I think the links are through

David, and they contacted us saying "we would like you to come along and do a live performance art thing." The Curse was already around at this point because they were around and we got up and it was just like the *Raw War* single. We got up and it was the dialectic of the proletaniacs, blah, blah, blah, 1234 bery, bery, bery. Mickey Skin comes in going "You suck. Fuck you."
Ian: Mickey could swear very well. He knew every profanity in the world and he would keep rolling with them.
Paul: Yeah, but I did the "12345" so I was on it too.
John C: So this is in London? We went up and did this show and in trade for that we said, "could we rehearse in your basement?" and they said, "Yes." So we go into the basement. Most of the crew from CEAC go overseas to all these things.
Paul: The Venice Biennale I think. They went to the Venice Biennale and left the kids to look after the house, so, what do the kids do when they look after the house?
Ian: They throw a party.
Paul: The parents go away. We throw a party, which was the greatest party ever.
John C: And John sits there and says, "this would be a great place to put on a gig," and that was the end of it. Or the beginning.
Ian: So we did.
Paul: And boy did we ever.
John C: Just like Mickey Rooney.
Paul: The problem is the parents come home eventually, and when they came home, boy did they come home, because the whole place was mayhem.

MRR: And you guys played upstairs and downstairs in this building?
John H: We played once upstairs.
Paul: Did we?
John H: We played once up there with the hardwood floors.
Paul: I think it was a show though. It wasn't a rehearsal.
John H: That was where one of the videos was filmed. An 8mm or something like that. That might have been the first gig I did with you guys.
John C: That's at the end. That's after isn't it? Or maybe we did it in London and then we did it upstairs there.
Ian: I'm right.
John C: Because that's the bit that's in the *Raw War* single.

MRR: And who thought of turning the space into a club?
Ian: It was John Hamilton. He was the entrepreneur.
Paul: He thought, "Hey we can make some money at this." Your never gonna make money in a band so you might as well start a club.
Ian: You could make more money as a club owner then we did as a band.

MRR: Who came up with the name Crash 'n' Burn?
Paul: This is one of those stories...
John C: ...a much-discussed thing.
Paul: I went to see the Viletones at the Colonial Underground and Steve Leckie always tried to wind me up. He said there's this band out there called Crash 'n' Burn. They are fantastic and all the record companies were trying to sign them, and because I was really vulnerable, and really gullible, and always believed everything everyone told me, I said, "Wow. There's a band out there called Crash 'n' Burn and all the record companies want to sign them. I want to hear them." I spent three days trying to find this band. I think I told Ralph or I told someone else the story and they said, "He's made it up. There is no band called Crash 'n' Burn." Someone else like John Catto said, "Yeah, it's a magazine," or something. Was there a magazine called *Crash 'n' Burn*, John?
John C: No, but it is a standard Air Force kind of expression.

MRR: There was a *Crash 'n' Burn* newsletter though.
John C: Yeah, but it was after the club.
Paul: We did our own newsletter.
Ian: We had a Gestetner press.
Paul: It was the Ralph paper.

MRR: John, I forgot to ask you, what was the name of the fanzine you and Rob Sikora had?
John C: *New Century Gazette*.

MRR: Was the sound good in the Crash 'n' Burn? Did you guys put together the P.A. yourselves?
John H: Yeah. It was actually a really good P.A. We used to get a couple of great big A7 bins from Westbury Sound. We had a very professional board not too different from the board being used here.
Ian: We had monitors and we used to go out to Canada Lighting and set them up for the weekend. We had a pretty reasonable set up. We would go to the LCBO to get our special occasions permit and load up the truck with beer and fill up the bathtub with ice.
John H: It was a week's worth of work to put on two days of shows.

MRR: Tell me about the staff.
Ian: The staff was us, plus our girlfriends and a few people that wanted to be involved.
John H: It's true. Xenia and Lucasta used to work the bar and all the other bands helped build the club. I'll never forget seeing Lucasta in her high heels scrubbing the toilet. Her and Karen Smailes.
John C: Who was later Sally Cato.

MRR: She was from the Concordes and later the Androids and Smashed Palace.
John C: They were totally involved.

MRR: Who booked the bands?
Paul: I think we all had ideas of who we wanted to play there. I think it was very democratic and felt that all of the major Toronto bands should play there, even though in a lot of ways we weren't getting along so famously, but I insisted that the Viletones and Teenage Head, even though they bad mouthed me a lot, I still felt they should play there. So they got booked. The Poles got booked, primarily because they were around. They were one of the early bands. The Dishes got booked exactly for the same reason.
John H: The Curse. And there were some other bands. The Tools, and there were some other bands... the Dents.
John C: The Dents were always there so they had to play.
Paul: If it had continued everybody would have played there, because I was incredibly democratic. I just thought that everybody that was part of the scene should play there, whether I liked them or I didn't like them personally and that was part of the difference between, say, the Gary's, because the Gary's had a disliking for me and so the Diodes never played in any of the Gary's venues, which wasn't fair to these guys, but as soon as I was out of the band, John's individual project went and played at the Gary's and your individual projects always played there.

MRR: That probably answers the question why you never played the Last Pogo?
Paul: I was already living in New York during the Last Pogo. I had already left town.

MRR: That was during the hiatus between the first and second LP.
Paul: We got sacked from Columbia and I moved to New York, so there wasn't much chance that the Diodes were going to play at that stage, and John had left the band. It was a very transitional time.

MRR: Getting back to the Crash 'n' Burn, how did the out of town bands find out about the club like the Nerves, the Boyfriends, the Dead Boys?
John C: All of them different. The Nerves are linked to the genesis of the club. After we put it together we were building the bar and we were about a half a week from opening it

and there was quite a lot of preparation for it. Bob Segarini turned up and he goes...
Paul: We didn't know him, but Ralph did so we thought that was a Ralph connection and he said, "I have this band from California that would like to do a gig," and that was the Nerves. So we said, "Sure. They can open the club with us and the Diodes would support them."
John C: He was going, "They are half way across the country."
Ian: They showed up in their car with a little U-Haul trailer just dogging it out across the country.
John C: Bob Sampson sort of beige suits and Rickenbackers.
Paul: And Yves St. Laurent polyester suits. They must have sweat like pigs in those suits.
Ian: And vests and mink coats.

MRR: And Blondie did them a big favor by recording one of their songs, "Hanging on the Telephone."
John C: They sure did but you know their version is still the best version.
Ian: They were a good band, good harmony singers.

MRR: Did you ever turn anyone down who wanted to play the Crash 'n' Burn?
Paul: No.

MRR: So anyone could play there?
Ian: Can we tell the truth?

MRR: Did Goddo ever ask you to play there?
Paul: No.
Ian: We wouldn't let the Battered Wives play there because they had a song called "Lover's Balls" and we went to see them at the Colonial Underground and we thought they were vulgar. They were coarse and vulgar lager louts right?
Paul: I think the other thing was the Long John guy, John Gibb. I don't know what I did but he tried to beat the shit out of me.
John C: Paul, I'm gonna stop you before you do this. It wasn't John Gibb. John Gibb was not the one. You're talking about the first version of the band, which had Toby.
Paul: Who I liked.
Ian: Toby was a cool guy.
John C: The only person from the Battered Wives that you would know is Toby. That's it. Toby. The guy who ended up playing bass in the Government. Not Andy, but the other guy, and an English drummer called Colin Fox.
Paul: That's it, Colin. He's the one that nearly murdered me.
Ian: Yeah. He was an awful person, actually.
John C: Colin Fox lept off the stage and actually, I thought he attacked Ian.
Paul: No he attacked me. Ian probably stepped in and helped me out of the situation.
John C: Funny enough, I ran into Colin Fox fourteen years ago in London. In fact at that point he had played on Jeremy Gluck's solo album, you know the guy from the Barracudas.

MRR: Who you guys later played with? Did you guys recognize the crowd at the Crash 'n' Burn, or were they people you had never seen before?
Ian: It changed. That's for sure. It started with familiar faces but the line ups got longer and longer and longer and people were coming from all over the place.

MRR: And the Diodes did double as janitors for the Crash 'n' Burn. That must have been interesting cleaning it up.
John H: It took the whole of Sunday with mops and brooms and pails, and with 2,000 square feet, picking up all the paper cups and god only knows what else.

MRR: Did anyone ever leave their drugs behind?
John H: There weren't many drugs around at that point. Smoking marijuana was verboten at that time because that is what the hippies did and there was a little of what they called green snot speed which people used to take a little bit of, but there was mostly beer and a little bit of speed. A very mild kind of speed, sort of like the Beatles in Hamburg.
John C: Was there any crystal floating around then? Or was that when I was in high school?
Ian: There weren't a lot of drugs back then.
Paul: It wasn't drug fuelled.
John H: I mean people took speed to stay up all night and drink more beer, but it wasn't like they were strung out on it. They just took a little bit of something. They took some pills that had a little bit of caffeine in them like the Red Bull drinks now.

MRR: Now you guys put out a newsletter called the *Crash 'n' Burn News* and the biggest one I saw was four pages. I think a couple of them were two pagers.
Ian: No it was longer than that. I've got a few of the issues. They are eight to ten pages.

MRR: Did you sell them or just hand them away?
Ian: Handed them out.
John H: We were doing this on the photocopiers at CEAC, doing a couple of hundred issues.
Paul: Whilst the parents were away.
John H: Using all their paper. Wearing out all the cartridges on their photocopiers.
Paul: Come on, it was like a Xerox machine. It was probably five cents a page. We were just printing them off. Charging them to Canada Council.

MRR: Now the club lasted about six weekends. The final show was on August 12th, 1977 with yourselves and the Dead Boys. Why did the club close down?
Paul: The parents came home. So, basically what happened is they came home and went... First of all, there were complaints from the main tenant in the building. The main tenants in the building were the Liberal Party of Ontario and they were already suffering in the election. They were definitely down in the polls and that was their headquarters.
Ian: It did come out in the press that there was punk music in the basement of the Liberal Party headquarters and it came out as a scandalous thing. It was the *Toronto Sun* that first did this and somebody in the Liberal Party took great umbrage with the fact that this was being reported and I'm sure there are records somewhere about the correspondence between AGO and CEAC.
Paul: Basically, some spin doctor decided that this was really not a good marriage to have a punk club in the basement and we were also saying things like "Maggie Trudeau was down here every night."
John H: She might have been there. There was someone that looked like her.

MRR: I think she was hanging around Ron Wood wasn't she.
Paul: Yeah, well that's around the same time isn't it? We were spinning our own myth even in those days. We were saying Maggie Trudeau was down there. It did make it in to some of the press that there was this punk club in the basement of the Liberal Party of Ontario. The *Sun* saying "Those nasty punks. Those filthy punks." So they did not want us there. They were the main tenants of the building and basically the parents came home from Venice Biennale and they said, "Those are our tenants. You are going to have to leave."
John C: I think the be all and end all of the thing is that the complaint letters started to filter in right about the time that they all returned from Europe. They came back to a little pile of letters saying "It has come to our attention that your premises is infringing on our noise regulations," and so on.
Paul: Yeah, it was as simple as that and also the famous story of some complete idiot that was out on day leave who kicked in the front doors upstairs. They smashed the door into the main office building which was upstairs. There were cans strewn all over the road.

Our bun fight was the great bun fight of '77.

MRR: Do you feel the Crash 'n' Burn kick-started the scene?
Ian: I think it did.
John H: It certainly was the first club in Toronto that wasn't full of seats and tables where you were supposed to sit there all night and just drink beer. We had no place to sit down except for a couple of crude benches if you were ready to collapse and that was the whole idea. I mean prior to the Crash 'n' Burn there were clubs supposedly for young people that would just have tables and you have to sit there. If they bothered to have a dance floor, it was the usual postage stamp size. You weren't to get out of your chair with a drink so they were very restrictive, but ours was a lot freer and you could actually meet people. When you go to these old clubs and you could never meet anybody at the table four seats over. People circulated in the Crash 'n' Burn.
Paul: We were down there today looking at it and remembering things. You know, it has to be pointed out that we legitimately opened a legal space that sold alcohol and served alcohol and had a venue and had an entertainment license. And basically, how we did it was the Centre for Experimental Art and Communication was an art gallery and we got a special license. The police came several times and they'd go "This must be a speakeasy. We've never heard of this place. Let me see your license." And we would pull out the license and there it was. They could do nothing.

MRR: So you would get permits for each weekend.
Paul: They were weekend permits for every Friday and Saturday night.

MRR: Now CEAC published a magazine. In issue #8 1977 they included the *Raw War* 7" single with yourselves and the Curse. Tell me about recording this.
John H: It was just a lark we did one afternoon in the basement because we wanted to do them a favor for letting us use the space.
Paul: We had all of our P.A. set up from the Crash 'n' Burn.
Ian: I think Dave Stone was the engineer.
John H: Dave Clarkson played bass. Ian went back to rhythm guitar. And I think we played E-chord for eight bars and then we would go up to the F-chord and do another eight bars and then go to F sharp.

MRR: This would have been one of the first punk rock singles ever. How many were made?
Paul: Probably 2000.
Ian: Do you think that many?
Paul: Maybe 500.

MRR: Tell me about Amerigo Maras and Bruce Eves.
Ian: Both nice guys. Politically motivated.
Paul: Marxists.
Ian: Very left wing in their orientation. Dedicated to performance art primarily. Both of them I believe are gay.
Paul: Heavily into gay politics, but the kind of gay politics going on in '76-'77 which was very different to the way things are today. They were complete outsiders culturally.

MRR: So you guys were friendly with the Curse. Tell me about the Curse.
John H: I'm not sure how we actually booked them, initially. I remember walking down the street to the Crash 'n' Burn one day and seeing their poster. I'm going, "Oh. This is a new band around," or something. I think Paul must have made the first connection with Mickey.
John C: I think it's before that, because the Curse were involved in the *Raw War* thing and the performance things in London. Those pre-date the Crash 'n' Burn.
Paul: They must have been done at one of those gigs like the Viletones at the Colonial Underground. I must have met them at the Colonial Underground, but Ralph's here.

MRR: Now Ralph, we are talking about the Curse and how the Diodes met the Curse.
Ralph: The Curse came with the Viletones show. The Viletones booked the Curse. Although, we booked the headliner, the headliner usually brought their own bands and they were responsible for the behavior of the opening acts. For example, we brought the Dents. The Viletones brought in the Curse. Teenage Head brought in Wheel Base. He was a hippie guy or something. And the Poles, I think we all left the club when the Poles played. I went home to Montreal.
John H: And they claimed that they didn't get a piece of the bar. They were whining the whole time.
Ralph: You see, the bands got 100 percent of the door, if I recall.
John H: Yeah, that's what it was and she wanted a cut of the bar and the stage wasn't big enough for her.
Ralph: Yeah, but they were from the bar band world.
Paul: Who played with the Poles?
Ralph: That I don't know. I'd have to look at a poster. I wasn't there. The one show I did, I think I showed up at the end and there was nobody there. I remember I walked through the door and went, "Whoa. What's going on here? There is nobody here." I think everybody went to the Bev. Sorry Poles, although I do love Michael Jordana. She's nice.

MRR: So, the Poles were always kind of on the fringe. They weren't really part of the Viletones...
Ralph: They came out of the whole performance art thing. They were older. Doug Pringle used to be in that really cool band. When I was in high school there used to be a show on CTV called *Here Comes the '70s*, and it had the spectacular opening shot of this trio playing on a rock and a helicopter circled around them. Anyway, he was part of that group called Syrinx and so they kind of joined the party a little late.
Paul: Michael Jordana was a Patti Smith wannabe, if I recall. I mean she was a good artist. Her paintings were amazing.

MRR: Apparently she is still producing art today.
Ralph: They were part of the scene but not part of *the* scene. Do you know what I mean? They didn't come up through our experiences. Basically, they were doing it anyway.
Paul: They asked me if they could play the Crash 'n' Burn and I said yes, because I had seen them at A Space, and I know that they were a good band, but it was a lot of Patti Smith-type ranting and screaming into the microphone. They weren't really part of us but they were there and they asked if they could play and I said yes.

To be continued in next issue!

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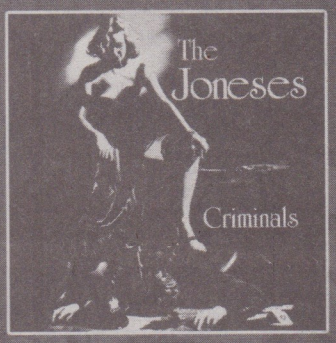

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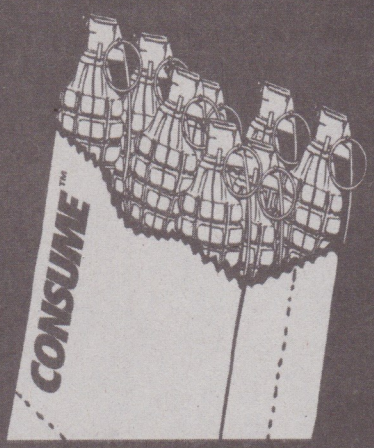

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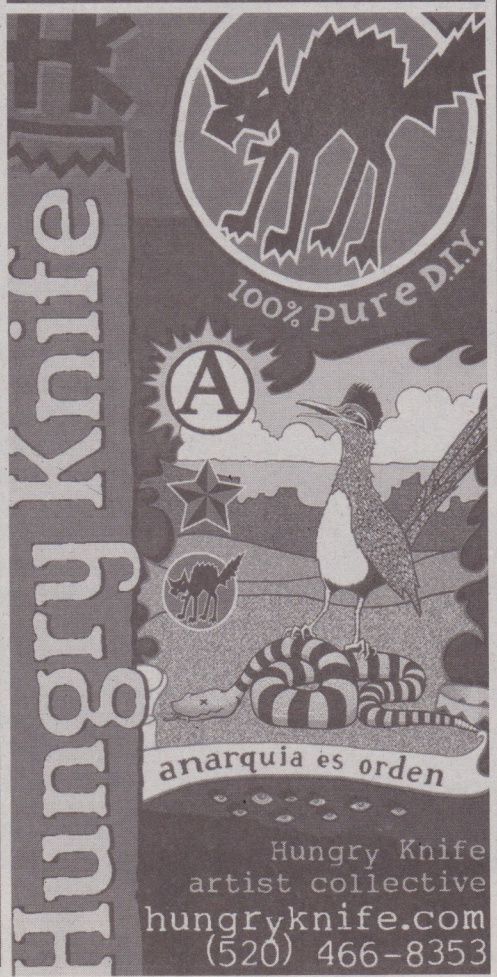

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photo by Jason Penner

BRAIN HANDLE

I sat down with the collective entity known as "Brain Handle" on May 29, 2008 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – a fitting Thursday Night. For nearly an hour, these magic men told me tales, drank my wine, and we were feeling fine. While these wizards present some catchy and fierce musical sounds, I found there was also much to discover about the truly unique and thoughtful men that make up The Brain Handle.
Interview by Kyle F.

MRR: Everyone please state your name and what you do in Brain Handle.
Thursday Night: I'm Thursday Night and I sing in Brain Handle.
Secret Bogo: I'm Secret Bogo and I play the guitar in Brain Handle.
Peppered Egg: I'm Peppered Egg and I drum in Brain Handle.
Flan L: I'm Flan L and I play guitar in Brain Handle.
Magic Potion: I'm Magic Potion and I play bass in Brain Handle.
(The Brain Hound was also present for the interview.)

MRR: Do you feel it's important to have a kind of mystery behind the band?
Peppered Egg: Behind this band or any band?

MRR: Behind this band.
Thursday Night: Is there a mystery? I don't even know what people think. There is no mystery.., This is news to me.
Peppered Egg: Is mystery a bad thing? I mean, all the records are self-titled, we've never used our own names, and there's never been a picture of us in the records.
Thursday Night: Yeah there is.
Peppered Egg: Of us?
Secret Bongo: Yeah, we're on the back of the LP.
Peppered Egg: We have an LP? Oh, you mean the 12"... I don't think it's a conscious decision we make. We can only proceed as Brain Handle proceeds.
Flan L: I don't think it really matters. People can enjoy the band without knowing what our real names are or knowing what we look like. They would probably enjoy it less if they knew those things.
Peppered Egg: To give you a more for real answer, we don't spend any time thinking of what our next name is going to be. Usually someone just says, "Your name should be this," and we agree, or someone says, "This is what we should do for the cover art," and we all agree.
Flan L: Sometimes we come out with our own names, which I guess is kind of cheating. I was given a name when I was born, but I choose to use a different one. I choose what I want to be called.
Secret Bongo: We usually just change them when we get bored of them.

MRR: Do you feel like using "non-traditional" punk/hardcore artwork is sort of the same idea? Do you find that every hardcore record kind of looks the same, or...?
Secet Bongo: The first 7" looks like a punk record–the one with the brain.
Flan L: It looks like a Brain Handle record. I think there definitely doesn't need to be a definite aesthetic for a record or for a band's look. You don't have to present yourself in some tried-and-true, by-the-books manner to get people to pay attention or

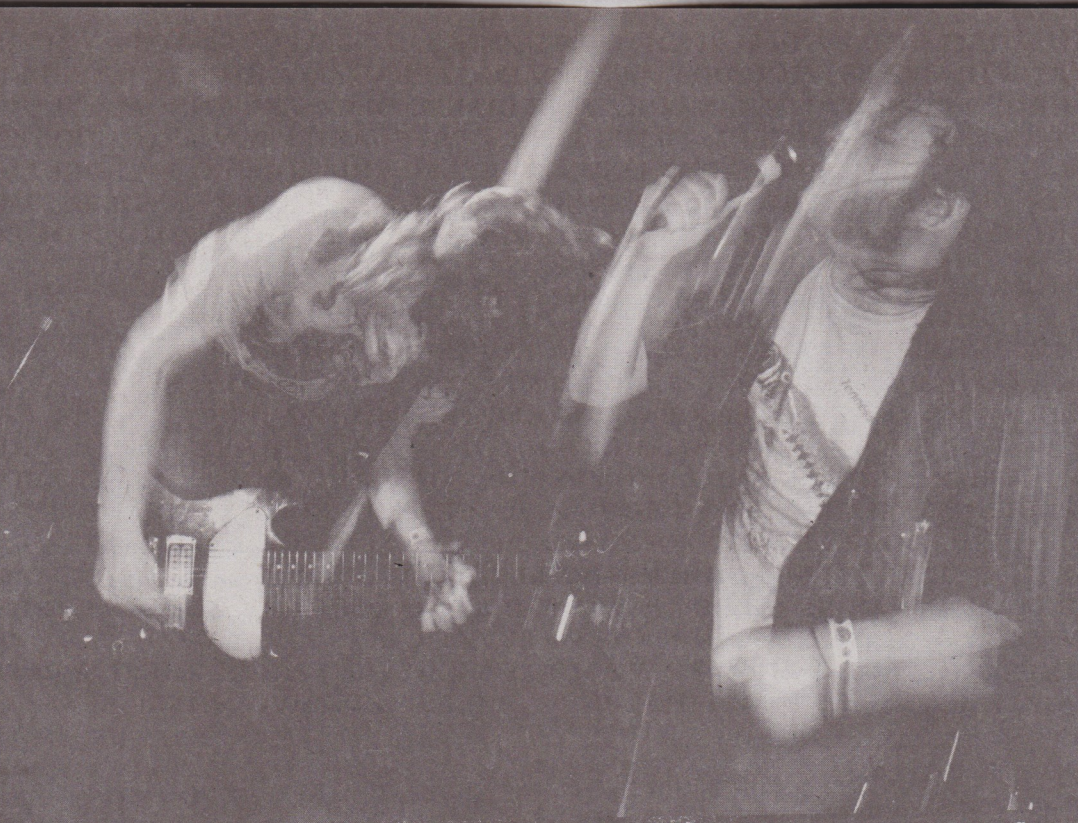


photo by Jason Penner

be like, "I wanna buy a record that sounds like this. I'll buy it based on the cover." I don't really feel like that's valid.

Peppered Egg: At the same time, we don't spend a lot of time trying to make sure it doesn't look like a hardcore record.

Secret Bongo: Yeah, we just said to Greg (Mantooth), "Paint us something," for the first two 7"s.

Thursday Night: I think it's a bummer when you walk into a record store and look at the covers and can tell what they're going to sound like.

Flan L: We usually just try to include our friends who do art, or who are creating things that we appreciate, or that kind of fit in with our "vision." Wow, I just said "vision." We asked a shirt to be a record cover, and it agreed.

MRR: I was looking at the list of bands that played No Way Records Fest this year, and it definitely seems like there's a pretty big '80s fast hardcore revival kind of thing going on. Do you feel like you're part of that?

Thursday Night: I think we have influences from those bands, yeah...but I don't think we were like, "Let's start a band that sounds like this or that."

Peppered Egg: Just like the artwork, it sort of just evolved from us getting together and playing music.

Magic Potion: Ever since I was in the band, I feel like we've changed a lot too.

Flan L: We've all definitely listened to '80s hardcore, and probably some of our favorite bands are '80s hardcore bands, but the music is kind of what it is. It's not like, "We need to sound like this" or fit a certain description. When any band starts, you always have a period where you're going to wear your influences a bit more boldly, but once everyone puts their own creativity into it, it becomes something else.

Thursday Night: We all have our own unique interests that we bring to the band.

Peppered Egg: Both outside and inside of hardcore punk sphere.

Secret Bongo: But there's definitely a hardcore punk, metal influence. There's no denying that.

MRR: What are some of the things that influence you that aren't bands?

Flan L: Thursday Night reads a lot.

Peppered Egg: I read too...although it doesn't really come through a lot in my drumming. That isn't to say the only thing I influence in the band is drumming, everyone influences everything in this band. We all write riffs and we all read the lyrics at some point or another.

Thursday Night: For lyrics, the state of the world influences me.

Peppered Egg: You're not necessarily going to write political lyrics, but they are political in the most general sense. They don't deal with specific issues—I mean, you're never going to see a Brain Handle song about Darfur.

Thursday Night: The lyrics go down to the simplest level. You're going to have issues like Darfur hanging over your head and that causes a certain fear, paranoia, stress.

MRR: One thing I've always found interesting is that, at least locally, you seem to have a big crossover following, where you can play all the different venues in town and get different types of people coming to check out your shows.

Peppered Egg: I like that we can play more varied shows. I think it may have to do with the fact that we have varied musical interests.

Flan L: I don't know how a lot of other cities are, but it seems like in Pittsburgh a lot of people are generally into local music and there aren't a lot of bands that are playing a similar style, but people will support most local bands. It

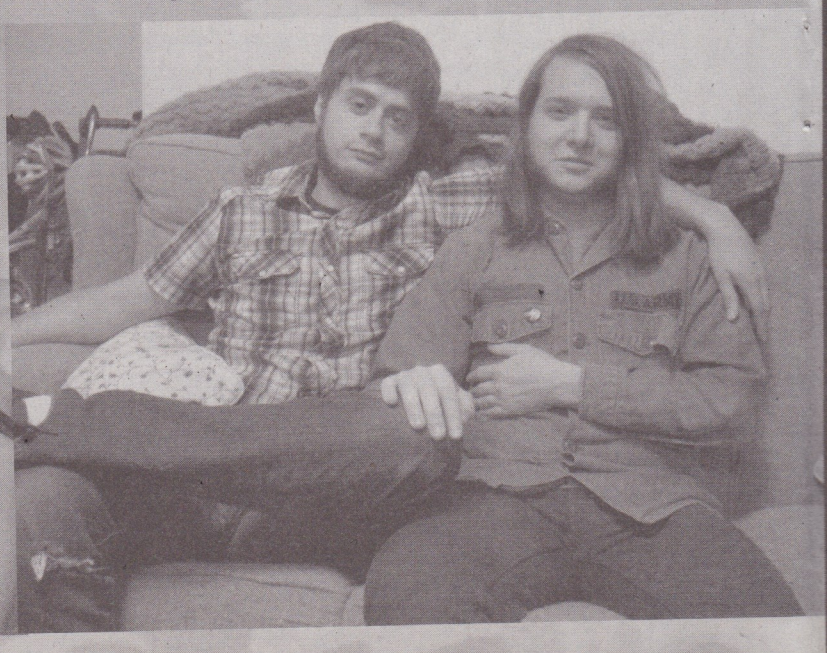
also helps that a few of us in the band book shows fairly frequently and know a lot of other people in bands and we're supporters of what they're creating. So its kind of a two way street.
Magic Potion: I feel like we're all just friends and want to play shows together.
Secret Bongo: Yeah I think a lot of it just stems from personal friendships, where someone will come to hang out and then they get into the band.
Flan L: Pittsburgh isn't a really big place.

MRR: Why don't you tell me a bit about the new 7" and the concept between "Smiling/Smiling Again"?
Thursday Night: They played "Smiling" for me at practice. The song was really cool and I didn't have lyrics yet. All these songs out there are about hating everything. I mean, I hate a lot of things, but I also enjoy a lot of things. Anger and hatred is poured out of so many outlets into the every day person, which makes them angry. So why not just smile against everything even though we're all going down the shitter.
Peppered Egg: So does it carry over into "Smiling Again"?
Thursday Night: "Smiling Again" is when you're out for a little too long. The ending is talking about "Mr. Saturday Night"—I was listening to that song and realized the song is just about someone going out and ruining themselves...that shouldn't be a celebrated pop song. I realized a lot of those songs are about people who have had enough, and so they go out and give in to excess. When they are being oppressed, they have to break out of that by doing controlled activities with controlled substances, which makes them smile, but it's smiling into enslavement. You just keep smiling, but you're not really happy.
Flan L: The dudes from Iron Lung put it out.

MRR: You're one of the few bands out there that doesn't have an email or MySpace. Is that intentional or do you just not care?
Peppered Egg: I'm not going to pretend like I have a huge stance against it since I have a personal website (eggs.com—friend me), but for the band I prefer that we don't.
Thursday Night: Lots of bands have MySpaces, which is run by a giant corporation. I'm not going to advertise for them.
Peppered Egg: On a more practical level, how many times have you talked to someone about an upcoming concert, and when you ask them about what they think of the groups involved they have gone to the band's MySpace page and decided based on whatever tracks they have put up there, (played through their tiny computer speakers) that it did not warrant them to go to the concert.
Thursday Night: I'll admit it. I've skipped gigs because of the MySpace.
Flan L: Using MySpace as a tool to get in contact with other people and to book shows is all well and good, but I don't think that you necessarily need to advertise your band in that way to get people to notice you. I don't really care to have the band associated with corporations that are pimping some kind of persona or image to a lot of people.
Peppered Egg: I think we'd have a lot of trouble getting that page to look the way we would want it to anyway. It's covered in ads, and we don't want people deciding to go and see Brain Handle based on some streaming 2kbps mp3 of "Cold Pavement."
Flan L: I guess if someone wanted to they could make a fake Brain Handle page.
Thursday Night: Don't fucking do it or I'll come to your house.

MRR: Closing comments? What's next for Brain Handle?
Flan L: Some gigs, some concerts, some new songs, some weekends.
Thursday Night: I wanna drop some knowledge on all you people out there in magazine world, about The Fitt.
Peppered Egg: We're doing a weekend with the Fitt—that is a future plan. Playing the most happening cities in the United States—Cincinnati, and Cleveland.
Flan L: No sarcasm, we were being genuine.
Secret Bongo: We might be playing No Idea Fest this year. Some drunk guy asked us to play in Texas. Drunk guy, get back to us and we will play.
Flan L: There's a couple places we're probably going to play—Chicago, DC, Boston... I would also tour Europe. That would rule.
Peppered Egg: We have four records out—a self released 7", another 7" on Fashionable Idiots Records,an LP on No Way Records, and new 7" on Iron Lung Records. Plus a demo and some comp releases.
Secret Bongo: What's up to Chris Niels.

photos by Kyle F



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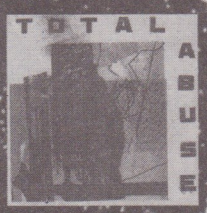

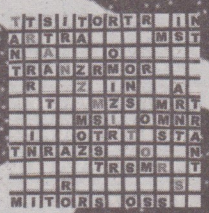

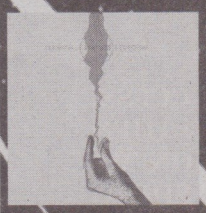

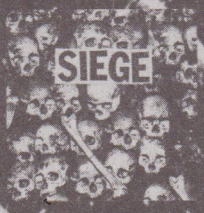

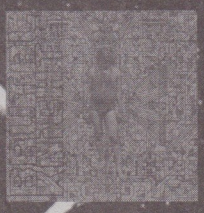

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THERE'S ONLY TWO PEOPLE IN SHELLSHAG, SHELL AND SHAG. SHELL PLAYS GUITAR AND SINGS WHILE SHAG PLAYS DRUMS STANDING UP AND ALSO SINGS. SHE HAS BELLS SEWN ON HER BELT AND ANKLES, SO THERE'S LOTS OF FRANTIC WIGGLING TO COAX THE NOISE OUT OF THEM. THEY BOTH SING INTO A MIC STAND THEY BUILT THEMSELVES THAT'S SHAPED LIKE A Y, SO THEY FACE EACH OTHER WHILE THEY PLAY. THEY'RE KNOWN FOR PUTTING ON SHOWS THAT BRING THE HOUSE DOWN, SOMETIMES LITERALLY. YOU CAN ALWAYS EXPECT SOME CROWD SURFING, THINGS BEING THROWN ACROSS THE ROOM, AND THE SINGING ALONG THAT SOMETIMES THREATENS TO DROWN THEM OUT. THE END OF THEIR SHOW USUALLY RESULTS IN THE TWO OF THEM EITHER BUILDING A SCULPTURE OUT OF THEIR INSTRUMENTS, AMPS, AND THEMSELVES, OR COMPLETELY SMASHING SHAG'S DRUMS. THEY'VE BOTH BEEN IN LOTS OF BANDS BEFORE, INCLUDING 50 MILLION, STATIC FACTION, KUNG FU USA AND HICKEY MILLION. THEY RUN STARCLEANER RECORDS OUT OF THEIR HOUSE IN BROOKLYN, WHICH HAS PUT OUT SOME OF MY FAVORITE RECORDS RECENTLY.

ONE TIME SHAG WAS TALKING TO ME ABOUT LIFE AND THE NOTION OF SUCCESS. SHE TOLD ME THAT FOR YEARS SHE FELT LIKE SHE HADN'T "MADE IT" AND THEN SHE SAID, "BUT WHAT DID I FUCKING EXPECT GLITTER TO BE POURED ON ME EVERYWHERE I WALKED? "LATER THAT NIGHT, WHILE PLAYING A HOUSE SHOW, A HUGE TRASH BAG OF POPCORN WAS RIPPED OPEN AND THROWN AROUND THE ROOM. IT WAS RAINING DOWN ALL OVER EVERYONE AND SHAG GRABBED ME BY THE SHIRT AND SAID, "I MADE IT JOHNNY! THIS IS MY GLITTER." AND SHE WAS RIGHT.

Interview by Johnny NoPants

SHELLSHAG

Jen: Oh my god, you have prepared questions? I bet they're going to be really intelligent questions.

MRR: Groundbreaking. Pulitzer prize. How about you start by telling me how long Shellshag has been around and how the band started.
Jen: The band started four years ago, technically, as this project. With the stand-up drums, and stuff. The first tape titled Shellshag is from 1998, though. And that's when we started. We were just hanging out in my room with acoustic instruments and pig nose amps and stuff. We're thinking of putting those recordings out on the next record. They're really weird.

MRR: Was this in San Francisco?
Jen: Yeah, and we got cassettes and Shell got really motivated and forced all these tapes on people. No one really got it or knew what the hell it was. Then 50 million slowed down, Static Faction broke up, and Kung Fu USA was born, with the two of us and Danny Lovefinger on bass. And we kind of forgot about Shellshag for a little while. Then Kung Fu USA wasn't touring as much as we wanted to, so we started Shellshag so we could play more. And we just did exactly what we wanted to. I stood up and faced Shell, and had the body percussion, and he faced me, and we pretty much did our first EP at our first practice.
Shell: We did a few Shellshag shows out in '03, under the name Revenge.
Jen: We were in San Francisco from '93-'00, then we moved to west New York for six months. Then back to San Francisco, and Kung Fu USA opened for Iggy Pop. We stayed in SF until summer '04.
Shell: Then Kung Fu USA did one tour for the *Neversign* record, then in the beginning of '04, we decided to do Shellshag instead of Kung Fu USA, and go on tour for a year.

MRR: Did you do it?
Shell: We did do that. We made it ten months.
Jen: We moved out of our house, and were homeless and toured for a year.

MRR: I think one time you told me, "gas is cheaper than rent."
Shell: Well, it used to be.
Jen: We lived in the station wagon. We just kept booking shows like crazy. Michelle from Panache was booking as many shows for us as she could, and we were doing as many as we could.
Shell: The band really formed that way. We easily play more than 100 shows a year, every year since it started. Some years over 200 days out of the year, we're playing a show. So that's pretty much our practice. That's how the band is. It slides into these little niches, and rides them for a while, then moves onto something else.

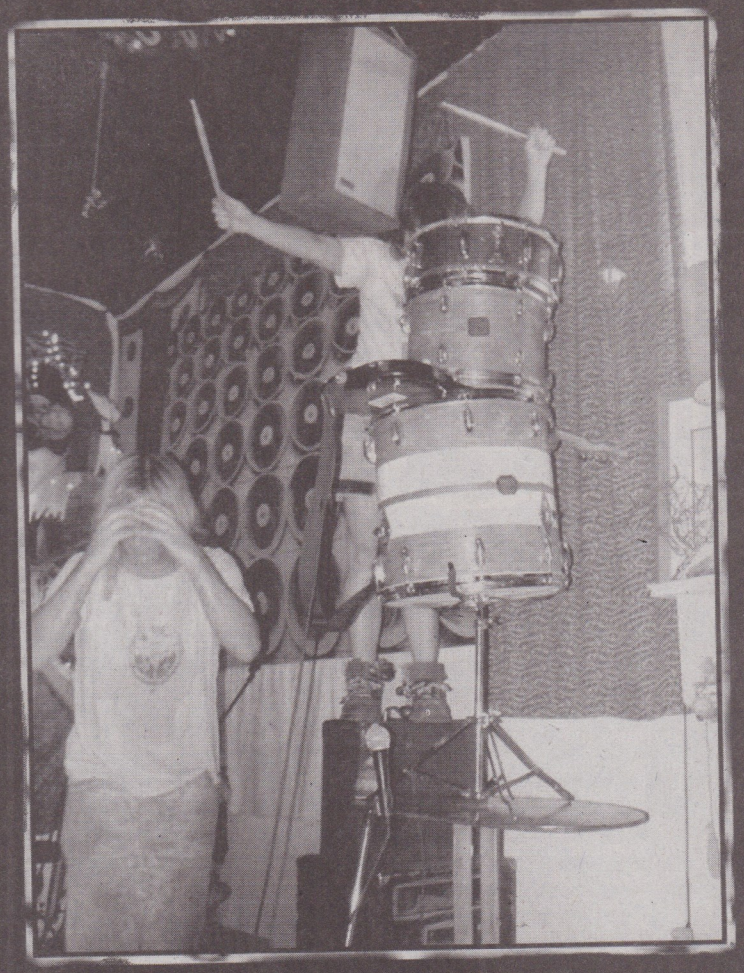
MRR: So how did you wind up in New York?
Shell: At the end of the ten-month tour. We left SF in summer '04 and got here February '05 after touring Japan.
Jen: Yeah, DMBQ and Panache Booking set us up a killer tour there. That's how we met the King Brothers, and we played with some great bands in Japan. We played with DMBQ, Afrirampo, Gasoline, Ruins, and Masonna.

MRR: Tell me about Shellshag's first EP.
Shell: Well, we went to Gary Young, from Pavement's house, to record Kung Fu USA, we had met Gary at a show we all played together—but Dan couldn't come, so just Jen and her brother and I show up, and right away, Gary's like, "come on in here!" We started recording within minutes of going in.

Jen: Gary's got a pool and fruit trees and all this awesome Pavement shit hanging up, and we're freaking out, because we're huge Pavement fans. And Gary's ready to go right away, but the Shellshag material wasn't even really ready yet. The same lyrics over and over, a few chords... Then we start playing "Magnet," and Gary's like, "what's the song called?" and we say, "Magnet" and he's like, "you can't call it 'Magnet,' you got to call it 'Stuck on the Fridge,' or something!"
Shell: And the current title of that song, Gary's note, came about because as we were recording, we'd open our eyes from our subtle moment singing duo into the mic, and we'd see Gary holding notes up to the glass, and banging on it.
Jen: The notes would have new lyrics on them, or suggestions.
Shell: And then, at the end of the instrumental recording, he comes flying into the room last minute, knocking down amps and stands, gets his fucking fingertips on the bass pedals of a Leslie organ and hits this note. Gary's note. So there's the two "Gary's notes."
Jen: The lyrics we sing now are kind of by accident. They shifted back and forth for a while and now we sing "Gary's note" and "Joey Ramone" in the song, because we saw the Ramones documentary during that time and we were so emotional about Joey. Plus, my brother interviewed the maker of that documentary on the day Johnny died.
Shell: After that, 50 million did a tour in 2005, and we had found this space, our house, but I was on tour all summer.

MRR: So Shellshag was playing shows in NYC then, but not at The Fort or Tompkins house yet?
Jen: Oh, we played every shitty club in New York.
Shell: We had a great time at a lot of them, though.
Jen: Oh yeah.

MRR: And then you got that email from Cory...
Jen: Well, let's get back to our timeline... In 2004, we let go of our kick-ass apartment in SF, and got rid of almost all our stuff, and put what we could in the car. Then, after not sleeping for days, SF style, we played our first show of tour at the Silver Lake in LA, It was the greatest set of our lives. We were so out of our minds.
Shell: It was horrible.
Jen: But still the greatest. Then we got dicked by some promoter who said we sucked, so we weren't getting paid. We never played the Silver Lake again.
Shell: The last hurrah. And during that big tour, Starcleaner put out three releases. The Shellhead solo, the *Mission Limo Blues* 7", and 50 Million *Broad Side of a Barn and Shit on a Single* CD.
Jen: Then, we were back in NY and we had always said that if we



could move into this house, with the Mink Lungs, then we would. So I'm wandering in the East Village in New York, and they call me out of the blue, and they're like, "How's the weather in San Francisco?" And I say, "I'm in the East Village!" and they said, "No way! We're calling because our roommate just moved to San Francisco!" So they had a room open, and we moved in there.

MRR: Funny how that always seems to work out.
Jen: So we weren't sure how long we would stay, but the rent was good, and we can practice here, and our roomates, now in the band Glove Compartment, are awesome, so we stayed.

MRR: Where did Starcleaner start and where did the name come from?
Jen: Well, the name is from my all time favorite book, *The Starcleaner Reunion*.
Shell: It's a children's book. And Jennifer wrote my favorite children's book. It's Starcleaner #4, and it's called *Your Star in the Sky*."
Jen: So that's where the name initially came from. But in 1994, we opened a warehouse space in San Francisco and that's what we called it, Starcleaners. From 1994-1998 we did killer shows there.
Shell: The first twelve records came out while at that location—The Faggz, Static Faction, Knittles, 50 Million. and a killer spoken word comp with Tribe 8, Harriet Dodge, and Michelle Tea that is called *The Loving Mouthful*. That's a killer record we're sold out of.
Jen: It's half spoken word, half music, recorded live at Starcleaners.
Shell: Starcleaners was really the most amazing of all the warehouses I've ever been in.

MRR: When did you get involved?
Shell: Jen put out the first eleven releases before I became a part of it.
Jen: But 50 Million really made it become a label because we were just putting out a few buddies' records. I almost never even thought of it as a label, but then the 50 Million 10" came out, *Broad Side of a Barn*. I had a jeep at the time, then I sold it. So, everyone knew I had some mey. Wade from 50 Million came over and basically made me put that record out. Talked me into it. Total Mission. So I did it, and I couldn't believe it, but it actually sold. I was 25 then. But it wasn't really a label yet.
Shell: That's not totally true. We had catalog numbers. We had distro, some at Mordam, some at Subterranean. We had Revolver distro for the three Kung Fu USA records... but we were really only experienced enough to take care of ourselves, in that we only had enough money and enough free time to put out records we were playing on. We were kicking out records left and right. One or the other of us was in 50 percent of the first fourteen releases. So then we shifted the focus a bit. We wanted to kind of show some respect for the label, and for the bands we weren't in. We put out the Tulsa record, and Songs for Moms, and the Reaction record this year. And we'll be doing Thee Headliners, Kreamy 'Lectric Santa, and the Future Virgins soon. And of course, we did the Stupid Party 7" and we have the Shellshag/This Bike is a Pipe Bomb 7" coming soon too.

MRR: How long have you been a couple?
Jen: Ten years.
Shell: In '98 it was official. But we were kind of secretly dating in '96 and '97.
Jen: Yeah, we hated each other's guts then. We were mad we met. We didn't want to be in relationships. It's still kind of that way now.

MRR: When did you start using the Y-shaped microphone?
Shell: Actually, one time we faced our mics at each other at a show. And that's how we practiced at home. But by the end of the show, we were tilted and half facing the crowd, because that's what we were used to. But in the end, who I really wanted to face was the other person I knew really liked the band enough to put all this time and energy into it. Which is, of course, your bandmate. But we couldn't keep from tilting forward, so I built the stand so we wouldn't turn. If you do, the other person has to turn with you. You're locked in.
Jen: He built that in like five minutes.
Shell: It's nice, it's kind of become the third band member.
Jen: We played a show just six weeks ago or so, and the first mic stand we built got snapped in half by some asshole at a show with "Rize rage."

MRR: What's "Rize rage?"
Jen: Joe Porter coined that. They were giving out free Rize, which is like a knockoff Sparks, and this guy was chugging a ton of them. Then he jumped on stage and started singing Fugazi lyrics. So Shell gave him a little shove, and he fell over the speakers and into the crowd taking half of the mic stand with him. Joe and Eliza were our only friends at that show, and the guy wanted to fight Joe.
Shell: Yeah, he told Joe, "Come outside." and Joe's like, "Why?" and he goes, "Cos' me and my buddies are going to stomp your face in!" So Joe goes, "Well, then I'll probably just stay here, man." Joe totally stood up for us.
Jen: "Rize rage." It was a good time though, we like to play shows like that, and make new friends—you have to play shows to everyone.

MRR: More than a lot of punk bands, you guys seem able to play a lot of shows that aren't punk, but then go play a punk house right afterwards.

Jen: Well, we've been doing this for so many years, and we like to play to everyone... we don't care what anyone thinks. Isn't that punk?

Shell: Punks can play any show they want, the difference is that we do play those other shows. It seems that most punk bands play within the punk world on punk shows. We play every type of show there is—that's the difference. Anyone can play any show, all you have to do is ask; and since the best bands we play with are in the punk scene, hopefully more bands will go play outside of their safety zone—they owe it to the world to spread their music! No scene, let's hug. In some ways, it's harder than playing for all our friends who know all the words and we know genuinely like us, but it's fun to do all different types of shows. You'd be surprised at what people like what music. Like my mom always said, "Don't judge a book by its cover."

Shell: Our best shows are the punk shows though. You guys sent us off on that last tour so greatly. That was the one that resulted from the email from Cory that you had mentioned before. He wrote, "you guys are kinda playing some really lame shows, why don't you come play The Fort?" And we did, and he was right, it was much better than many of the shows we were playing, but we do play some great shows elsewhere through our booker Panache. That Fort show was the turning point of the label. We put out the Shellshag record after serious consideration and research and a little hunting for someone else to put out the record. First time ever, we were like, "let's call our buddies to call buddies, and try to get someone to put this out." And in the end, I'm pretty sure we never actually asked anyone to do it. All we did was devise schemes and plans and draw targets and maps and shit, but in the end, we decided to move forward full plow with Starcleaner

Records, and we put out our gatefold LP with CD included, *Destroy Me, I'm Yours*."

Jen: People kept telling us we were crazy not to put it on our own label.

Shell: Plus, I think if that's the sort of thing you want, getting on a label, you have to actually ask someone. (laughing)

Jen: We're control freaks.

Shell: It was the right thing to do, sticking with Starcleaner Records. The Tulsa record was the first one we did in awhile that wasn't our band, and it ruled. We stuck with the LP plus CD format. That record is great! We also did Songs for Moms and The Reaction and we had a great year. We all went to the South by Southwest festival in Austin, Texas and played with the Slits and the Dicks at Starcleaners first SXSW showcase ever.

Jen: And all the bands do a ton of work to help the label.

Shell: A band puts out a new record, and goes out and plays shows all over the country. Man, that's the greatest thing. I love doing this.

MRR: Tell me about the new Triclops! thing you're working on.

Shell: It is Starcleaner #25. It's a new invention, a USB digital release, the Triclops! Noizetoy. Which is the first of many noizetoyz, created this time for the killer band Triclops!

MRR: Whoa. I'm looking at a sculpture, of a triclops, with a huge club in it's hand.

Shell: You can pull out the club and it's a USB device that goes into your computer, and inside that is the new Triclops! Alternative Tentacles album, *Out of Africa*, and an exclusive video. New Invention; Starcleaner Noizetoys. It's DIY digital. You could have a shelf full of these babies. These figurines, or cool ass little sculptures with your favorite bands music!

MRR: What's your favorite place to play of all time?

Shell: Sluggo's in Pensacola, FL, the old and new locations, and Mission Records, in San Francisco. And JJ's in Chattanooga, most recently, has become a favorite.

Jen: Yeah, we've been playing Sluggo's for more than ten years.

MRR: Both of you are at least a decade older than I am. Do you think staying involved in DIY punk is sustainable? Something you'll keep doing?

Jen: Definitely.

Shell: More so now than ever before. This topic could be a book in itself, so I'll just say, I think the key is to re-define what success means for you.

Jen: It's a tricky question, because there's been times when I felt like such a loser. Like my only choices were to be a druggie fuck up in a band or a yuppie. But at this point, I feel like a successful person. I kind of got through it and realized I do everything I want to do, and my dreams are coming true. Like, I always wanted to live in a big collective house, and be in a band I love, and

even have a job I like. I have those things now. Sometimes when you're younger, society's imposing force can make you feel like you're not successful if you don't make money. I don't think that anymore. It took me a long time to get over that fear of failure. But now I feel successful because I'm happy and doing what I love.

MRR: What do you do for money?
Jen: For years I was a housepainter, I worked in a video store, and we had the Starcleaners space. This year, I started my first nine-to-five job at age 38. I really felt like I failed at first, because those hours make me uncomfortable, but I really dig it. I'm an assistant to Gary Null, health nut extraordinaire.
Shell: We really use a combination of the band, our label, and our jobs here in Brooklyn to pull it all together. I still do house painting, but without touring, making records, and doing the label, it would really be pointless to succeed at anything at all.
Jen: Yeah, we both have jobs that we can always take off as much time as we want. We take off months at a time to tour.

MRR: Do you guys have a lot of sex?
Shell: Yeah, we have a ton of sex.
Jen: When we first met, actually, we had so much sex, that we would order pizzas and lower down a laundry basket with money and he'd put the pizza in there. So we didn't have to leave the room. We hated each other for like two years because we didn't want to be in love, but then we succumbed to our fate, and we stayed locked up in a room for months.

MRR: Let's touch on old bands, what was Hickey Million?
Shell: That was me, Wade from 50 million, Matt Rizler, Aesop and Matty Luv from Hickey in a silver shed on my friend Nicky's property in San Marcos, TX, 78666. We played a Christmas Eve show. Absolutely no one was there, but on Christmas day we recorded a Billy Bragg cover and four or five originals in that shed in 1997.
Jen: "I don't know dick about the Buzzcocks!" that's how my favorite Hickey Million song starts.
Shell: That's what I said to Wade in front of Steve Diggle from the Buzzcocks at the second 50 million show ever in 1995, outside the Chameleon. I basically worked all day, and came home, got loaded, lost my mind, and put on a Superman costume. I had this big beard and long weird blonde hair. I looked like some sort of bizarro Superman. Then I proceeded to go to a show that Wade had set up while I was at work, with Noah, who ended up being one of the full time bassists in 50 Million, and also played bass in the Faggz, who had an amazing drummer, Scotsy. And Scotsy played drums for us at that 50 Million show and he's easily the fastest, most speed-driven drummer of our crew at the time. We played like eleven songs in thirteen minutes, and walked out with our gear on our back, and I'm talking to like one hundred people at once, high as a kite, probably scaring them all, and Wade came up and said, "dude, Steve Diggle is at the show," and I was like, "who's Steve Diggle?" and he said, "dude from the Buzzcocks." And I screamed, "I don't know dick about the Buzzcocks." Two years later, that was the starting line for the Hickey Million song. For the record, I got it now, I love the Buzzcocks!
Jen: 50 million used to come to Starcleaners in a shopping cart. They were doing a tour with a grocery cart and battery powered amps, pushing each other around. Hickey was playing inside, and we let them in, and they'd always show up in their shopping cart. They played this Christmas show where they were covering "Jesus" by the Velvet Underground while throwing all these baby dolls and syringes into the crowd.

MRR: Is your real name Jennifer Shagawat?
Jen: Yeah. It's Syrian. I'm Syrian and Ukranian.

MRR: Okay, that's the Shag. Why are you called Shellhead?
Shell: From the ceramic shell job I had at the foundry. I'm a sculptor, and I cast in bronze, usually, which requires making a ceramic shell mold. And so I use to get this ceramic shell stuff in my hair, and they started calling me Shellhead. And it stuck.

MRR: What's up next for Starcleaner?
Jen: We are really excited about all the new releases we've mentioned and we are going to The Fest in Gainesville for the first time this year.
Shell: And Starcleaner is going to do another showcase at South by Southwest next spring, as well as a much bigger Starcleaner Texas party.

MRR: Speaking of that, how'd you get the Dicks to play?
Shell: We asked them, and they said sure.
Jen: They're that cool.
Shell: Our friend Ivy put us in touch with them, and that was about it. And I'm from Texas and know those guys a little, but my brother, Wade, the other half of 50 Million, is good friends with all those old school Austin guys, who are still the real deal down there in Texas—I grew up watching and learning from them—I owe a lot to all of them.
Jen: This year, we're going to try to find some land we can take over for a few days in Austin. So all the punks can camp out and play at our huge party.
Shell: It's a great music event down in Texas in March, but without all of the punks, it just doesn't seem complete.

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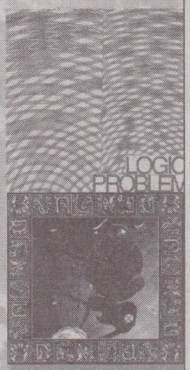

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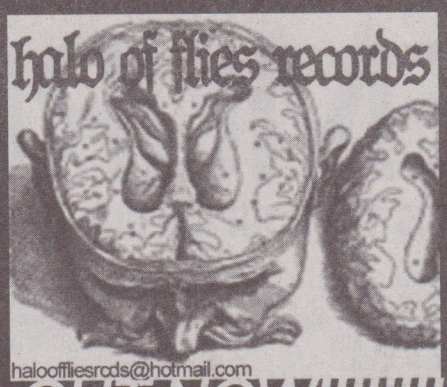

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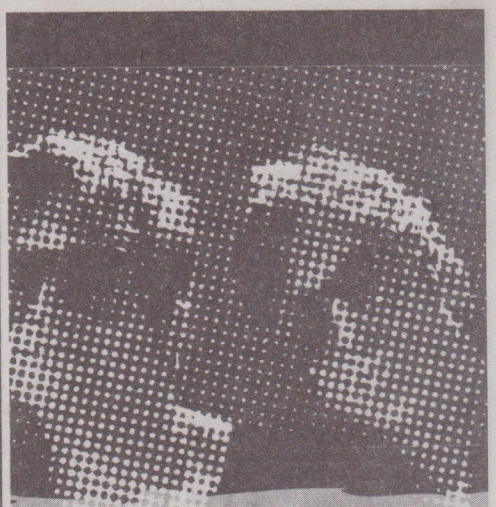

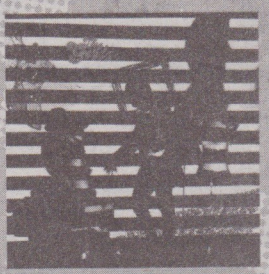

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SISTA SEKUNDEN

The hardest working band in Sweden is heading for the states. Spettekaka, sweat and no tears. Meet the hardcore-punk-heroes from the south of Sweden—Sista Sekunden. Sista Sekunden is Andy – bass, Tommy – guitar, Dempe – vocals, Julian – drums.

Interview by Fredrik Kullman
Photos by Oskar Wettersten

MRR: Tell us about your previous bands.

Andy: I've previously played in Satanic Surfers, Intensity, Asebia, and more shits. It's always been hardcore, just in different shapes.

Tommy: I've played in a bunch of projects that never got out of the rehearsal space, and I played guitar in the Confession.

Dempe: I play drums in Ett Liv Kvar. We haven't done anything for seven or eight years but you never know. I also played in The Livids, some kind of emo band from the countryside. We released a 7" that took us nowhere.

MRR: What's different with Sista Sekunden compared to your earlier bands?

Andy: The biggest difference is that this is a band that I've actually been in from the very beginning. Other bands I'd jumped into when they already had their baby years (*the best!*). Besides that, we only sing in Swedish, which I don't think I've done before.

MRR: What makes you get out of bed every morning?

Andy: I hate getting out of bed, whether something cool is happening or not. It's all the must-do's that make me get up every day. But I shouldn't complain; without them I'd be a dead fish lying in his own excrement.

Tommy: Getting out of bed is cool. There's always something to do. In worst case you could always watch some *Dawson's Creek* or listen to Amy Winehouse.

Dempe: My job, my girlfriend Anna, but most of all, my dog Bam.

MRR: How was your childhood? Tell us about the village that you come from.

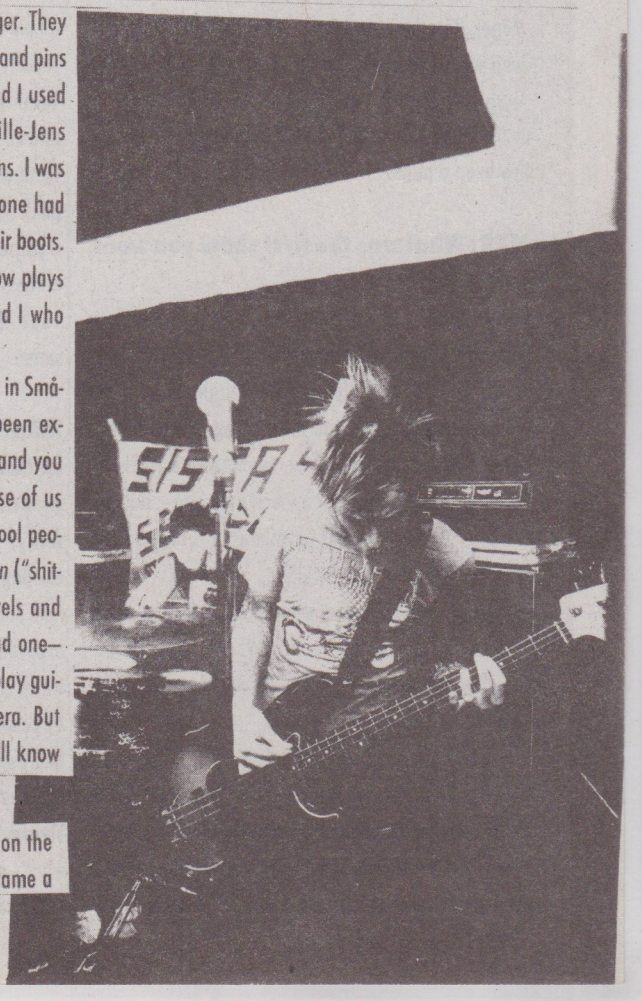
Andy: To be honest, growing up wasn't that hard for me. I had a pretty good childhood with my mom and two sisters. I come from Lund, a university town 18 kilometers north of Malmö. I lived there until I was 21 or so. There is not much crime, as opposed to where I live now—just people walking around being smart asses. Still, there were some punks when I was younger. They had a cafe called Wapiti where they sold shirts and pins and gave out pamphlets. My friend Ossian and I used to hang out there. One day a guy called Lille-Jens walked in and had white laces on his Dr Martens. I was so shocked because a few days before someone had told me that only Nazis wore white laces on their boots. Later on I formed a band with Jonas, who now plays in Skitkids, and from there on it was him and I who brought the ruckus.

Tommy: My childhood was the best. I was born in Småland, Sweden. It's a place in Sweden that's been exploited by the rich men of Stockholm. In Småland you have to grow up fast or you will die. But those of us who make it... oh my god... we have a lot of cool people that provides color to the area. Like *Sketpösen* ("shitbag")—he is a fantastic guy that hunts squirrels and eats them raw. And can't forget Tobbe—the bad one—who, according to him taught Jimi Hendrix to play guitar and sang with Elvis during the Las Vegas era. But Tobbe is dead now so I guess that we never will know if he was lying or not.

Dempe: I come from a small and boring town on the Swedish east coast. In this town you either became a drug addict or a punk rocker. Most people do both. I started putting on shows when I was 14 or 15 years old and still do. I also played in lots of different bands, but we sadly were nothing but local heroes. I've been a vegan since the day I moved away from home.

MRR: How did you find punk/hardcore in the first place? Do you have an exact memory of it?

Andy: It was a guy who took drum lessons after me who asked me to join his band. After my immediate "yes" he introduced me to the whole thing. I think one of the first shows we went to was Rich Kids On LSD. It was amazing. He was always more punk than me.



Tommy: More than ten years ago, and the bands were Refused, Outlast, and Forced Into. First time I heard Outlast I was at a friend's house and I got stuck in his room listening to that record over and over again all night long, while the others got wasted outside. That's the night I realized what I wanted to do with my life.
Dempe: I went to my first punk show in 1994. It was a support show for Amnesty with thousands of good bands on the line-up: Radioaktiva Räker, Charta 77, Mögel, Räserbajs, and so on...I was a fresh new punk who went there and met all these real punks. They were all cool and raw and hard, and that's when I realized I had to become one of them. Ever since then I've been a punk.

MRR: What was the first show you went to like?

Andy: It was loud as hell. I was so young and didn't know shit. When the first band started they almost blasted my ears off, and I fell in love with the noise. I remember going home with the ringing in my ears, a sweet melody that's been haunting me ever since then.
Tommy: I can't remember my first punk show, but the first gig I ever went to was Grymlings in Varbergs Fästning in 1992. That was excellent.
Dempe: I head-banged at every show and stage-dived at all the early shows I went to. When I woke up the day after my neck would be killing me. The pain would last for a week.

MRR: You have been involved in the punk scene for more than ten years now, what do you think have changed? What has gotten better, and what's worse?

Andy: I guess the biggest change took place within myself. You've seen all these trends come and go—the screamo thing with puffy hair, the times when everyone was super DIY and PC, the *care-not* era, skate-core, power violence trends that no one really could define, and etc—but things are basically the same. Loud noises you know. *MRR* is still there. It's still vinyl or death. Society has another grip on punk now with all these MTV bands, but real underground punk never dies and imagination never changes.
Tommy: I agree with Andy. The biggest change is at the individual level. Same idiots today as yesterday and same heroes.
Dempe: I hated that everyone stopped being vegan and politically active. I preferred when you could trust that everyone believed in the same values. Nothing has changed really. People get bored and then new ones appear. Personally I can't see what there is to get bored with, so I continue.

MRR How do you think the Swedish punk/HC scene is doing now in 2008? Do you have any personal favorites?

Andy: The scene is pretty strong with newer bands, venues, and just general interest. But the new generation is staying away from us. They seem to have no interest in punk rock except for the outfit. Instead they drink shitloads and dance in the park with alternative hippie-esque people. Strange. My favorites today are: Masshysteri, Randy, We Live In Trenches, and Fy Fan.
Tommy: There are a lot of bands. Personally I'm most into *käng* like Fy Fan, but bands like Masshysteri and Tysta Mari really prove the rich diversity of Swedish punk.
Dempe: The scene in Sweden is based on the remnants of the old scene that was at its peak between 1997 and 1988. There are new bands, but the people are the same.

MRR: You guys all live in Malmö, a town in the southern part of Sweden. Tell us about that region.

Andy: The great thing about Malmö is that it's not an exciting city, but people don't know that so they move here and all of sudden you got a dead town full of punks expecting something else. So they're forced into action, which is great. All bands and things going on are done by people who're not from here. I'm not from here originally and I don't think any of my friends except for two or three were born here. It's just a melting pot.
Tommy: There's nothing exceptionally awesome, that's what's awesome. But there's a lot of vegan food and that's cool.
Dempe: I'm just living in Malmö to keep an eye on the Danish. They also have cheap tofu here.

MRR: Your European tour with the Japanese band DSB got cancelled due to a tragic incident in Denmark. Can you explain what happened? And what were the effects?

Andy: Some coked up guys took a hell of a beating on our singer when he asked them to stop throwing bricks at the venue. They got thrown out from the show 'cause they were behaving violent and made people scared. We had to take Dempe to a hospital and he had to stay there. Julian and I continued the tour with DSB while Tommy and Dempe stayed at home recovering. Every fucking night I had to explain to people what happened. That whole tour was so strange because it was amazing hanging out with DSB and seeing them live, but I felt so shattered at the same time, almost as if I couldn't allow myself to have a good time.
Tommy: That was a big disaster, but it spurred us to do the mini CD. We probably hadn't been able to do it if we would have done the tour. I just crashed watching all of the *Friends* episodes and wrote new guitar riffs when Andy and Julian were away with DSB.

MRR: You tour a lot. How do you deal with that practically and economically; with rent, work, money, and crap like that?

Andy: I have a deal with my job that I can take time off to go on tour anytime I want. In exchange I get a crap wage. Money is not an issue, as we have low standards and don't waste cash on blow or any other shit. Rent and telephones must be paid, but somehow we make that work.

Tommy: I'm ruining my education, but it's worth it. I make ends meet by building stages, recording punk bands, and riding a motorcycle.

Dempe: I'm a tattoo artist man—I'm rockin' and rollin'...you know how it is...

MRR: Tommy, what are you studying?

Tommy: I've been studying a lot of different fields: religion, anthropology, political science, and at the moment sociology. The goal is to pass a teachers exam in religion and political science for higher education.

MRR: What do you do on the road when you don't sleep?

Andy: We listen to music, fight, cook food, watch *Dawson's Creek* on Tommy's laptop, fix the car, stay away from buying crap at gas stations, discuss religion and drink beer. We never stop to piss. If someone's *gotta go*, that poor bastard has to wait. Top three records in the van are: The Vicious's - *Alienated*, Good Riddance's - *Operation Phoenix*, Håkan Hellström's - *Ett Kolikbarns Bekännelser*.

MRR: What is the weirdest gig you ever had...venue wise?

Andy: We played in a theatre once and people actually sat down. It made me feel like we were in the '60s.

Tommy: I dunno, any is good.

Dempe: In Luleå we played in a venue that looked like a gas chamber. The floor was made out of concrete and had layers of dust that filled the room. My snot was black after that show.

Andy: There are these guys in Gothenburg, Sweden who are super excited every time we come there. They smash bottles and bleed and sing along to every song, which results in a fair mic fight between them and Dempe. I've seen them kissing him while singing.

Tommy: Only good people.

Dempe: Probably in Växjö in Småland where we played for seven people and like seven sound techs. The other bands were incredibly psychedelic. They played some kind of metal pop. Zed Is Dead was the name of one band. When they quit, people left, ha ha.

MRR: What is the weirdest gig you ever had...incident wise

Tommy: We had a day off in Umeå, and this guy comes up to us when we're standing by the water and starts asking us about a boat that was nearby, asking what kind of engine it had. Apparently it was a V8. It was a racing boat, and the owner claimed to drive from Haparanda to Ystad in 14 hours. Check a Swedish map and do the math.

Dempe: I had a headache and fever when we played in Stockholm once. The very same night Tommy slammed his bass in my head causing nerve damage in the left side of my face. Or when our three-week tour with DSB had to be cancelled the first night because I got smashed outside of the venue. I got head fractures that lasted for six weeks. I still can't feel the tip of my nose.

MRR: Dempe, your lyrics are great. How long do you work on them before you feel that they are done?

Dempe: Most of the times I come up with something when I'm out walking the dog and try to remember it, but when I'm home it's gone. The last two lyrics on the last two records were written the night before. There's stress for ya. I'm inspired by the stupidity of people, and the punk scene, oh dear god, the punk scene—so few who think so much about so little. I'm almost sure I'm not any better, but at least I'm aware.

MRR: In Swedish your name means "the last second." Is there a special meaning behind it?

Andy: We chose that name in the very last second before our first show. Almost. We had some other suggestions and they all stunk. Tommy had the funniest suggestions: Blueberry Snakes, Korea, Heder-smord, and crap like that.

Tommy: I guess it just felt good. Most Swedish hardcore bands choose English, and I've always found that a little strange. I really like Dempe's old band, Ett Liv Kvar, because they sung in Swedish. Sista Sekunden just felt right, immediately.

MRR: How important is the internet for you as a band and in your personal life?

Andy: I couldn't run my label without it. I probably could, but talk about re-learning. All tour booking, trading, ordering...Christ, it'd take so much time. Time we don't have.

Tommy: I think it's cool. When I got nothing better to do I just sit and watch Harley Davidson stuff. I don't know what I'd do without the internet.

Dempe: It is a fucking one-hit-wonder. Just like color TV.

MRR: Your records have always been co-released with either of your own labels, Instigate Records or Dempe Records. Is it important for you to have full control over your records?

Andy: Yes. We tried to trust other people but there were so many who let us down. Especially older guys who have been in the scene for a long time and think they deserve credibility without having to do anything for it. But we also gained some good friends along the way who've proved to be solid as can be and helped us in great ways.

Tommy: It's crucial for the band and the production to be DIY. If you constantly let someone else do it you'll get played.

MRR: What do you think of the USA?

Andy: I've been there three times and I really liked it. First time I was only ten years old, and I remember walking the dodgy streets in NYC with my sisters and my mom. It was kind of scary, but really exciting too! Last time I was there was in 2001, I think. I took the train from DC to Richmond to see Scumbrigade, Guyana Punch Line, and Flesh Eating Creeps at West Cary Street. Amazing show, and I got to sing with Scumbrigade. Then the next day I couldn't find the train station so I took a cab to get there and the taxi driver dude was eating fried chicken while driving, ha ha.

Dempe: I have a lot of prejudices against USA. It will be interesting to see if they are true or not.

MRR: Andy, you have been making fanzines for a while now. Is there a need for printed zines in this new modern internet age?

Andy: I think print zines are very important. Despite e-mails and webzines, people use paper more than ever. And I never read blogs or zines online; my eyes can't stand the screen. That's why I get so fucked up from sitting up all night answering e-mails and doing stuff that is artwork related for Instigate or Sista Sekunden. This is like asking whether it's useful to have a broken old xerox while making flyers or [record] sleeves. The feeling of something real, and not just 1s and 0s, is crucial.

MRR: What reasons would you need to say "no" to a show?

Andy: Imagine playing in front of 1,000 Nazi skins with your punk band. Some of them would maybe change their mind, and most of them would beat you up. Seriously, some shows are a no-no because we have an agenda that limits some possibilities. And I guess that's good. And sometimes you decline because you just can't make it. Like the other day, we declined to play with Propagandhi.

MRR: Andy, you played drums with Imperial Leather for a short while. How did that happen?

Andy: No that's not true. Their guitarist left the band so Kenko started playing guitar, which meant they were in need of a drummer. I said I'd do it, so I went up and rehearsed with them, but it wasn't really such a good idea with me living far away from the others, and honestly I don't think I was good enough. So that was that. This was in 2002 or 2003, I think.

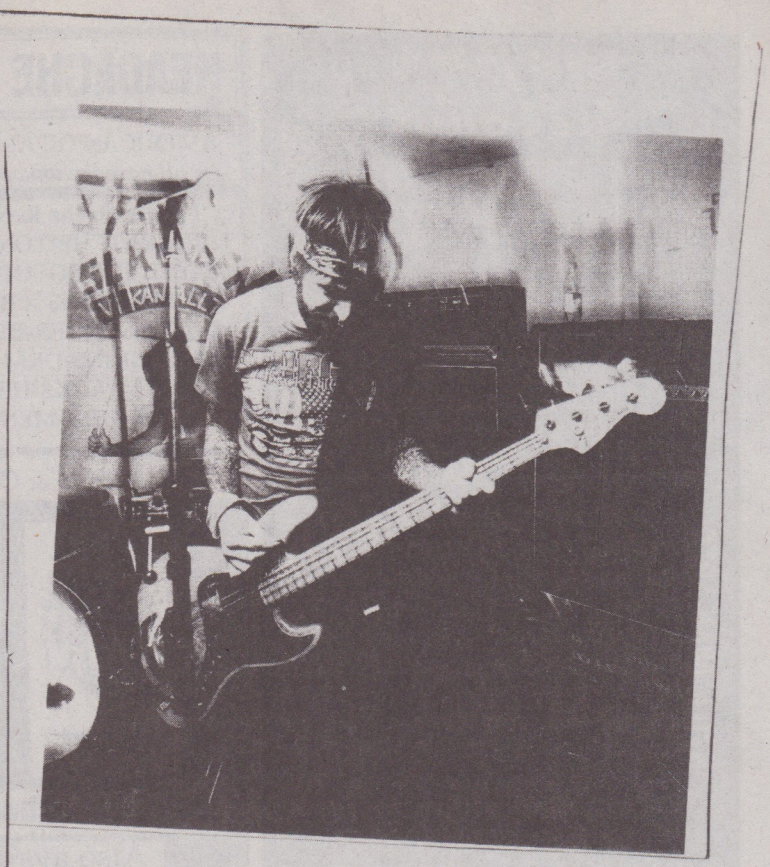
MRR: You were in Japan last autumn, how was the response there?

Andy: Really good. It was the first time we were there and I don't think people knew us before, but [now] they definitely do know. I met my friend Stine the other day and she said that people talked a lot about us when she was there with her band The Assassinators. The Japanese crowd is pretty crazy, but sometimes really calm and quiet. So it's a challenge to play there, but I think we did our best every night.

Dempe: It's a crazy country. I hope we can go there again, though it was really weird to be there.

MRR: Is the artwork on your records as important to you as the music and the lyrics?

Andy: Most definitely! I'm really picky with artwork and really interested, so I always put forth extra effort (and money) for the artwork. The only problem is that computers can never replace the touch of a punk hand, so sometimes it ends up too clean. I could go on for hours about lettering types, paper qualities, hot foil stamping, die cuts, laquers, rub offs, and what not...



MRR: Tell us about the Malmö scene, which bands do you think are great, both old and new?

Andy: The best band in Malmö right now is Härda Tider. They have members of Skitkids, Despite, Disco Volante, and Assel. They know their fucking hardcore and they bring the ruckus. The best old Malmö band is Moderat Likvidation. They were among the first punk bands I got into when I was a kid. I still love them and seeing them live a few months ago was really crazy.

MRR: Dempe, if you want to, tell us about your dog. Has he ever been printed on t-shirts? Is he hardcore? Is he a he?

Dempe: His name is Bam named after the stupid skater Bam Margera. He is a he. He prefers emo instead of hardcore. He is a forced vegan though I think he prefers to be a fregan. I have caught him eating leftovers from the ground several times. Bastard!

MRR: Andy, you are the man behind Instigate Records. Why is it more important than ever in 2008 to release records in an independent fashion? What are the three best things with Instigate and the three most boring things?

Andy: The whole DIY mentality was forced upon the kids a few years ago when it was so trendy. I took part and I still act by those measures—more or less. But today it means so much more to me because not everybody does it. It feels more sincere. The importance of doing it yourself is huge because no one can take that from you. It's a matter of pride. The three best things with Instigate is...um, I dunno. Nothing. It's just my hobby. Three most boring things is answering too many e-mails, saying yes to trades you know will never sell, and feeling like an ass for saying no.

MRR: A lot of old Swedish bands have reformed lately, Asta Kask and Mob 47 to mention some. How has that affected the Swedish punk scene?

Andy: I think a lot of young kids got involved with punk because of those bands. You know there even was a trend among the Asta Kask fans to dye the hair half black half white and spike it, 'cause the Dadde the drummer had that for a while. Really cool...but for me, I dunno, if it's just a matter of sentimentality I'd rather listen to my old mix tapes. But I think people should be careful about judging these bands. I mean they just play and people seem to like it. If you don't, then don't listen. ■

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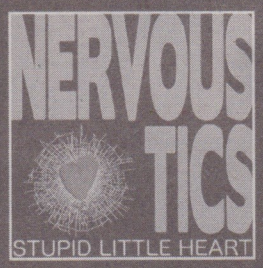

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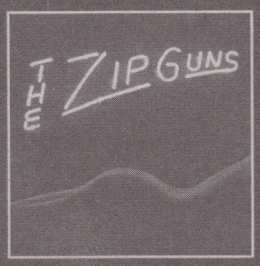

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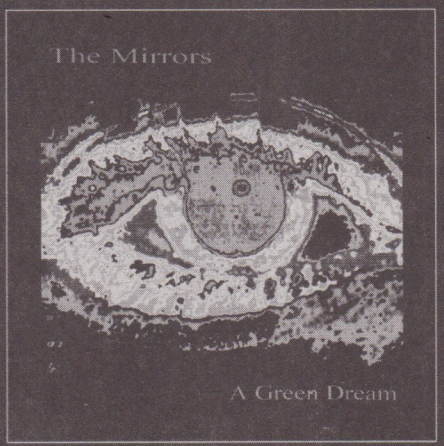

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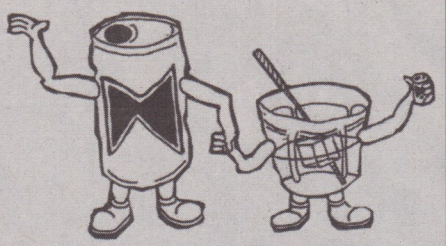

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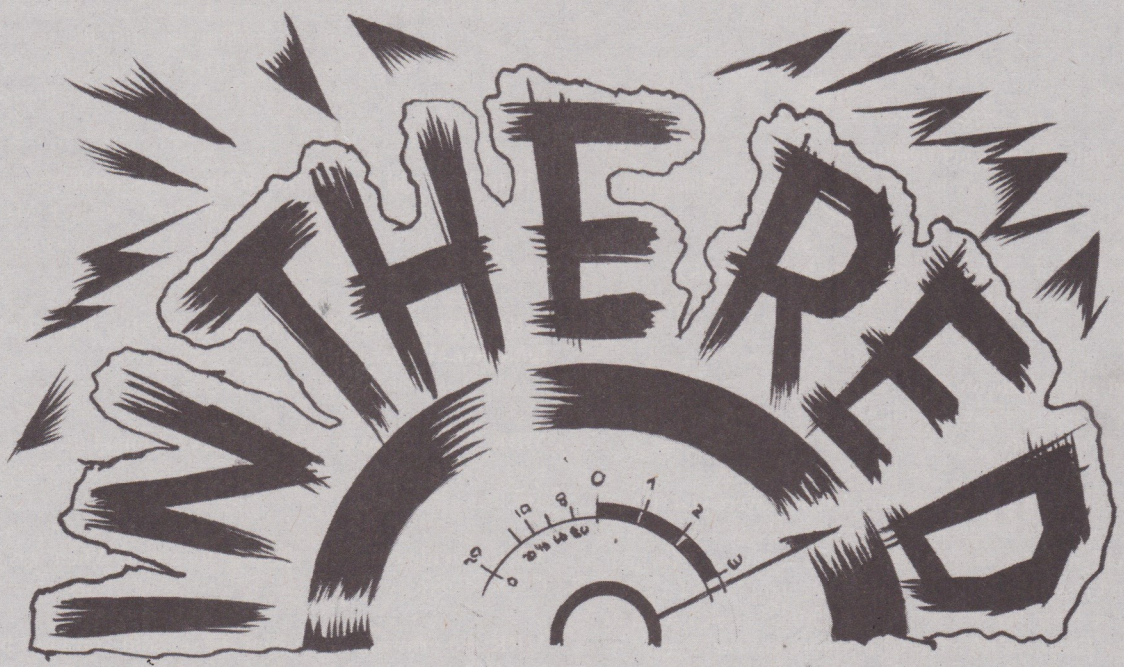

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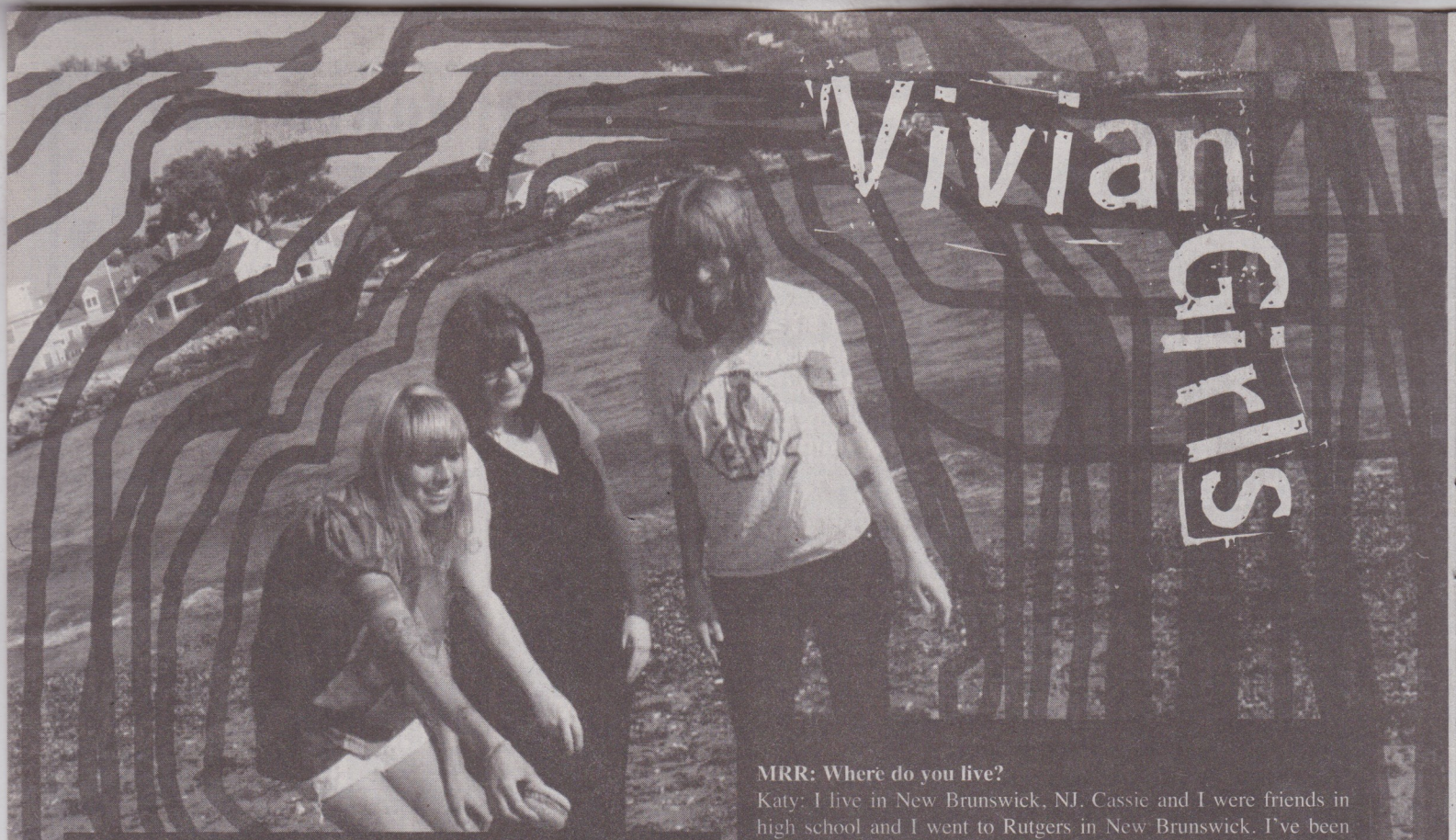
Vivian Girls



The Vivian Girls make unearthly music that brings to mind a supe- psyche Girls In the Garage band, referencing the C86 pop of THE SHOP ASSISTANTS with a distinct wall of shoe-gaze. The band lost Frankie Rose shortly after this interview—old news by now. Katy and Cassie are still going on playing with Ali on drums and should be playing your city as we speak. Interview by Kevin

MRR: So, how did you guys get together?
Cassie: OK, so how we got together was me and Frankie hung out a lot in Brooklyn because…

MRR: Wait, wait, wait, when did you move to New York?
Cassie: I moved to New York in fall 2004 when I started going to Pratt.

MRR: Why did you decide on Pratt?
Cassie: Because… I don't know, man. I wanted to do art and I wanted to live in New York City.

MRR: What was so cool about New York? Where were you from?
Cassie: Ridgewood, New Jersey, the same town as Katy. I was hanging out in Brooklyn every so often during my senior year of high school, and then I just thought it was really cool, and I just totally felt really comfortable here, and it was really exciting to me. I went to hang out with my Brooklyn friends after the prom instead of going to the shore with my classmates.

MRR: Did you try to get away from home?
Cassie: I don't think that was really the issue. I mean, I always liked New Jersey, but I just happened to like New York more.

MRR: So how did you end up in NY, Katy?
Katy: I don't live in NY yet.

MRR: Where do you live?
Katy: I live in New Brunswick, NJ. Cassie and I were friends in high school and I went to Rutgers in New Brunswick. I've been there for a couple years; I just finished my bachelor's in physics and master's in education.

MRR: So when did you guys meet for the first time?
Cassie: Me and Katy met outside of a Weezer concert. We had mutual friends in high school, but I didn't know who she was, so I was walking around in the parking lot after the show, and Katy comes up to me and she's like, "Hey, do you want a ride home?" And I was like, "Who are you?" And then after that we became friends.

MRR: Why did you ask her if she wants a ride?
Katy: Because, you know, we didn't have cars yet. My mom was picking me up, and I knew Cassie was from my town, and I just figured I'd ask. I'm nice, you know? Or just creepy.

MRR: Did you guys start hanging out after that? Did you guys both love Weezer a lot?
Cassie: Yes. Hahahaha… Duh.

MRR: I was number 87 in the Weezer fan club.
Katy: Whoa. Cassie and I started taking the bus into New York together for shows.

MRR: No big deal. But this was long ago. When was this?
Cassie: February 2002. I was in tenth grade, Katy was a senior.

MRR: So growing up in New Jersey, did you guys hang out a lot? Did you play in other bands before?
Cassie: I was in a band called Upholstery in high school. It was kind of like an experimental lo-fi punk band with really goofy songs and we actually had a song called Kickball Katy, written about her.

MRR: What was the reason you guys formed Upholstery?
Cassie: I just hung out with two of my best friends a lot of the time. We were all really bad at our instruments, but we all really liked

playing music, so we just decided to start a band one day and write really goofy songs. And then there was this guy Josh, and we made fun of him a lot, but he knew how to play guitar, so we asked him to join our band, and he became one of our best friends.
Katy: I couldn't play an instrument, so I couldn't be in the band. Or any band, for that matter.

MRR: Did you go see the shows though?
Katy: Yeah, that's when we started hanging out. I loved Upholstery. We would also go to see local shows by bands from Ridgewood and Glen Rock, like Seizing Elian and Fletcher and the Sticky Wickets. It's funny because some of the guys from Seizing Elian went on to form Titus Andronicus, and we're still friends with them.

MRR: So when did you move to NY, Frankie?
Frankie: I moved to NY two years ago from San Francisco!

MRR: Did you come here for change?
Frankie: Yeah, because I probably would have just stayed in SF and I always wanted to live on the East Coast.

MRR: How did you meet these guys?
Frankie: One of the first shows I ever went to in Brooklyn was Cassie's band Bossy who was playing at the Bent House. I moved into this house in Greenpoint called the Orphanage, and she would always hang out there. She was friends with my roommates.
Cassie: I think we officially met outside a Dynamite Arrows show.
Frankie: We did?
Cassie: I think so.
Frankie: My most vivid memory is the kickball game though.
Cassie: We played kickball every Sunday night in McCarren Park, and our mutual friend Robert picked us both to be on his team, even though he knew that we both sucked. Our team lost that night in the most hilarious way.
Frankie: Yeah, really sucked. If I see the ball coming towards me, I start running away.

MRR: Even if you're at bat?
Frankie: Yeah. And Cassie's just about as bad. That's the first real memory I have of hanging out.

MRR: Are you part of this league, Katy?
Katy: Nope, I never played with them.

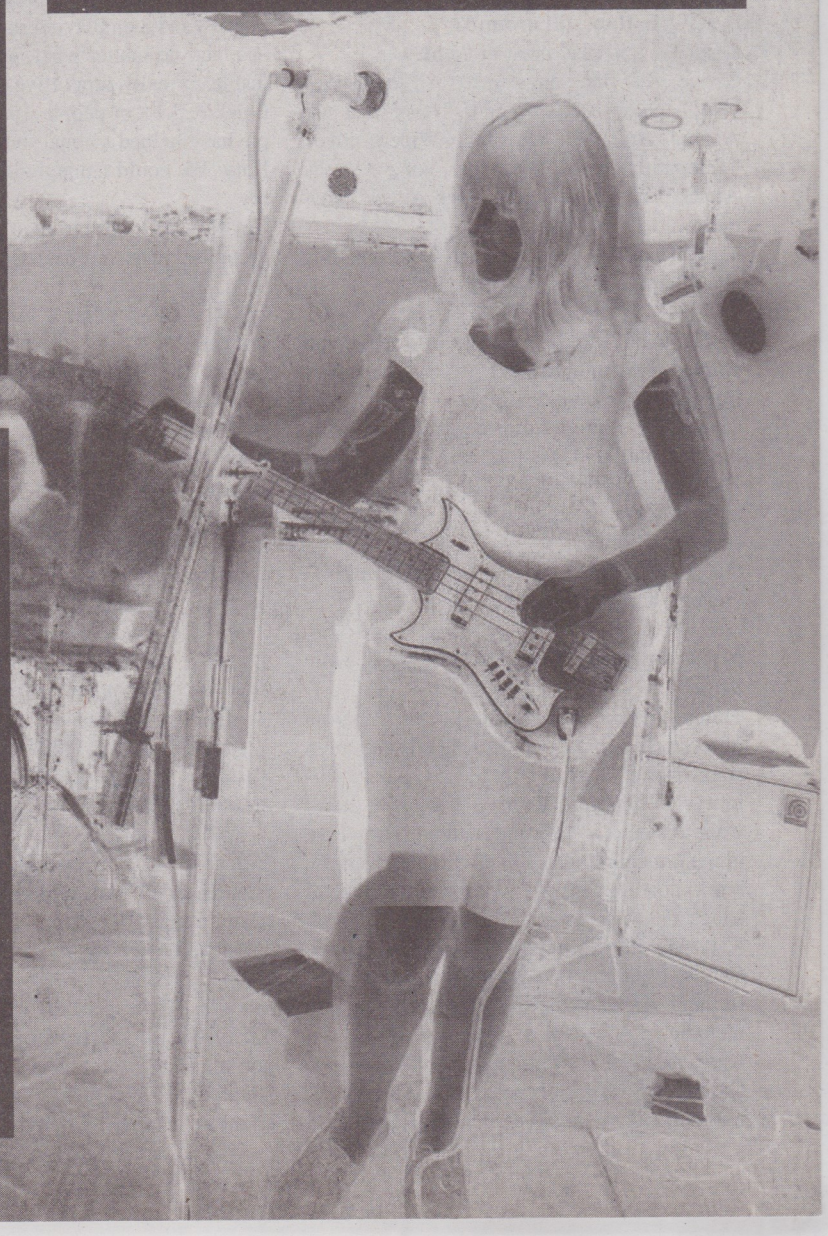
MRR: Were you part of *a* league?
Katy: Sort of. I lived in Rochester about six years ago for a few months, and there was a super secret kickball society there, and I was a member. But I can't really talk about it.

MRR: Fair enough. Do you really carry it like it is your cross or something? Like how did you get your nickname, "Kickball Katy?"
Katy: It's just alliteration. There are a lot of Katy's out there, and after I was knighted Kickball Katy in the secret society, I just kept it. People needed help telling us apart. Also, I played soccer my whole life, but then I got into music and not exercising, so kickball was the next logical step.

MRR: Off subject—I noticed you guys also have hamburger and milkshake tattoos.
Cassie: Bringing it back to North Jersey!
Katy: That was on purpose. Diner tattoos.

MRR: When did you get those? What was the reason?
Cassie: Spring 2006. Because we used to sneak out of our parents houses and drive to the diner a lot. Maybe too much. We didn't really have social lives in high school.
Katy: Yeah, and it was probably better than getting a tattoo that said "DINER."
Cassie: We like milkshakes and burgers.

MRR: Fair enough. So had you been in other bands beforehand, Katy?
Katy: I've been in a few bands before, all in New Brunswick. I sang in a weird riot girl/surf band with my friends Ali, Andrew and Pat in 2004. Andrew joined The Measure right after we stopped playing. Then Ali and I were in The Hand-Me-Downs. We were pretty awful, but we covered "Hang on Sloopy," "96 Tears," and "Louie Louie," so that was cool. Then I was in this other band in 2006 with my friends CJ and Kevin Manion, where I learned to play bass, but it fiz-



zled out pretty quickly. After that, I was in a pop punk duo with my friend Ali called The Pot and The Kettle. Just guitar and drums. We stopped playing about the time that Frankie and Cassie started Vivian Girls, because Ali moved to Germany for a semester.

MRR: How did Vivian Girls start?
Cassie: Frankie and I started playing music together in March 2007. A week or two later, Katy and I drove down to the Jersey shore to get tattoos together, and for the entire ride down, Katy was saying, "Cassie, we should start a band together!" And I just put two and two together, and I said, "Well I'm already playing music with Frankie, and we need another member, so let's get Katy to join." Our first show was May 13, 2007, at this rad punk house in Brooklyn, 131 Tompkins.

MRR: With whom?
Cassie: The Old Haunts, from Olympia, and Dead Dog.

MRR: When you guys started writing songs, what songs were you writing at the time? Are they still around?
Katy: We still play most of them.
Cassie: Our first songs were "All the Time," "No," "Such a Joke," and "Never See Me Again." And then we did a Wipers cover, "Telepathic Love," and the song "Snack Attack." We don't play "Snack Attack" anymore…
Katy: That was our 30-second hardcore song about hardcore snacking.

MRR: What bands were you into when you started writing songs? How did you guys imagine yourselves?
Cassie: I feel like we didn't start out with any kind of idea and we just sort of let Vivian Girls grow organically. We didn't really have an idea for what kind of band we wanted to start.
Katy: We didn't get together thinking, "reverb, harmonies…"

MRR: But what about the fantasy in your head?
Frankie: I never know what the combination of me and other people is going to bring out in songwriting, so I can only tell you what I definitely *didn't* want to play. I knew I didn't want to start a metal band, although I do love playing metal drums. I knew I didn't want to, but I know that songs I write tend to be metal songs.
Katy: We didn't want to be a ska band, either.
Cassie: I think at first we just wanted to have fun and we wanted our songs to be fast and melodic.
Katy: Fast was a big thing.
Cassie: We were really into being kind of fast, but with catchy melodies. That's really all we had. But I remember early on that we put punk/shoegaze/surf as our genre on Myspace, and it's funny how that was like a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Katy: 'Cause it did not start out that way.
Frankie: One thing that we all realized is that we all like songs—structured pop songs.

MRR: Well what structure do you take then?
Cassie: We like songs with a beginning, middle, and end.
Katy: In whatever order.

MRR: Cool. And why did you guys keep playing as a band?
Cassie: It's fun. And people have always given us a really positive response, which is really motivating.
Frankie: People were supporting us and liking what we were doing.

MRR: Who are these people? Anyone in particular?
Cassie: Wherever we seem to play, honestly. I feel like we started out playing punk shows in houses, and then playing shows in bigger venues, and no matter what, people have always just been really supportive.
Frankie: A lot of people. I mean so many people have helped us out, you know?
Katy: We could name a zillion names probably.
Cassie: We come from a very tight-knight group of bands and friends.

MRR: That's what I'm wondering. Who are they?
Cassie: Hunchback, Cause Co-Motion, Todd P has been really helpful, Meneguar, Woods, the Bikes in the Kitchen scene…
Katy: Ninja Sonic
Frankie: Japanther.

MRR: Did you know these guys beforehand or did they just come to find you because you started playing?
Cassie: I think we knew a lot of them beforehand. We all had a lot of friends in different groups in Brooklyn before we started the band. So we've played a lot of different kinds of shows with a lot of different kinds of bands.
Katy: We're really open to playing all kinds of different shows.

MRR: Do you consider these people friends, or do you just consider them contemporaries?
Cassie: They're totally friends! But I guess contemporaries too.
Frankie: We respect them also as musician-artists, but we also hang out with them, in the non-musical environment.
Katy: We have met some of our current friends through playing shows, like Abe Vigoda, who are the best dudes.

MRR: How did your first record come about?
Cassie: We recorded it right when we got back from our tour in January. It was a ten day tour.

MRR: Where did you guys go?
Katy: We went to the South. We went to Florida and Alabama and back with Ultra Dolphins.

MRR: Why did you choose to go to the South?
Katy: Because it was winter and it was cold!
Cassie: Yeah, that was pretty much why.
Katy: We wanted to go to Chicago and back but it was winter.
Cassie: So then we got back. And we were like "OK, we have around ten songs now, let's record an album. We're going to be tour-tight!" And then we didn't have very much money, so we were just like, "We're going make this really quickly; we're going record everything in the first day, mix everything in the second day." And that's what we did, and that's our LP.
Katy: Jeremy Scott recorded us at the Civil Defense in Brooklyn. We did pretty much everything in the first take or two.
Frankie: Boom, boom, boom!

MRR: OK. Before you had recorded the LP, you had a demo…
Katy: We had two demos. One was from June 2007; Craig and Mike from Hunchback recorded it. The second was from November 2007, which we recorded ourselves.

MRR: What made you start recording?
Frankie: Because it's fun. It's my favorite thing to do. I like recording more than anything else, personally.
Katy: It was actually kind of an accident, though. We were going to record those songs really quickly, so we could remember how they went, but we actually ended up liking the recordings. And we were really psyched on that. Woodsist Records just released the songs as a 7". We are planning on recording ourselves more in the future.
Frankie: And, may I say, they are my favorite recordings we've ever done.

MRR: Because they're endearing, or because they sound awesome?
Frankie: Because I think they just actually sound awesome. I really like to listen to them.

MRR: So did you already have labels in line to put it out, or did you record it first?
Cassie: Our friends Mauled By Tigers said they'd put out our LP before we actually recorded it. And then Katy's friend Matt Molnar had just started a record label called

Plays With Dolls. He loved us and he wanted to put out a single from the LP, so that's how the *Wild Eyes* single happened.

MRR: So the Mauled By Tigers record was coming out, and you guys decided to move on from there to In The Red. How did that happen?

Katy: There is this guy Mike Sniper, who basically got us on In The Red. He got our *Wild Eyes* single at Academy Records, where he is the manager. Then he got a copy of the full length in April through mutual friends, and then he started emailing us. He really wanted to help us out, put our records in Academy, get us on awesome shows, things like that. He is still one of the most helpful people we've ever met.

Frankie: Mike actually does some A&R work for In The Red, and he told Larry that he had to hear us. One day, I got about three text messages from people in Brooklyn like, "I heard In The Red is really interested in your record…" from nobody particularly involved. I have no idea why that happened. And the next thing I knew, we checked the internet and there was an email from Larry, and it was like, "What can I do to put out this album?" It was awesome. I think quite honestly it's one of my favorite labels.

Cassie: We were all really floored.

Frankie: It was such an honor that In The Red would even ask. We were really shocked that he liked it as much as he did, and it was just sort of like, how can you say no to that? How many bands really get to be on their favorite label? And I think it was just beneficial to everyone, and we figured it out with Mauled By Tigers.

Cassie: Yeah, it all worked out really well. They are still our good friends.

MRR: Did you guys go through a contract experience?

Cassie: No, we haven't signed any contracts. I don't think Larry is a big contracts guy. Unfortunately, this also means that some bands have left In The Red for bigger labels, but we're not leaving anytime soon. We're in for the ride.

Katy: We love Larry. We're not going to hurry to move on at any point. We're a new band. We understand our position. We're new and this is a really awesome opportunity for us.

Cassie: This is more than I ever thought would happen with any of my bands.

Frankie: Basically.

MRR: Pretty exciting, huh?

Cassie: Oh yeah.

Katy: Tell me about it.

MRR: What's really crazy about you guys is, even though you have been playing for a while, all of a sudden, you sort of went from being just another band that was around to a band that everyone was really stoked on. Has it been a lot different since the record came out?

Frankie: I am still kind of curious as to the extent of how stoked everyone is, because it seems like this phenomenon on the internet. At least that's how I see it, but maybe that's just the way it is now. Entirely blogger dudes and record nerds.

Katy: Our full US tour in May was pretty internet-hype-free. Some of our shows were great, but there were a bunch of not-so-great ones. At one of our shows, about ten people went, but they all left after the first band, and the promoter didn't even show up. We got paid less than $15 at several shows. Luckily, we tour in a hybrid car!

MRR: So you guys just toured America. What was that like?

Katy: We did a loop of the whole US. We went down to Pensacola, Florida, across to Los Angeles, up to Vancouver, across to Chicago. The West Coast was really good, the South was really good, and the Midwest had some ups and downs. There were some really good shows, like Lawrence, KS. We have a Honda Civic Hybrid car, which is awesome. I can't imagine having to fill the gas tank of a huge van; we barely get by in a car.

Cassie: My favorite show on tour was at the Smell in LA. It was with Pocahaunted.

Katy: It reminded me of Death By Audio, which is my favorite Brooklyn venue.

MRR: Was it just nothing but kids too? Last time I was at the smell I felt like it was like detention or something.
Cassie: No. It was, like, twenty-somethings.
Frankie: I felt a little old, I'm not going to lie.

MRR: So, I mean, that's such a rad world. It's a bunch of people who really support themselves. That guy Jim is such an awesome dude running that place. Did you meet him?
Katy: Briefly. He seemed nice.

MRR: No big deal. So you guys toured America. Did you meet other people? What was it like going to these towns? What were the people like?
Katy: We met some really great people, I can't wait to see them all again on our next tour!
Cassie: We met some kids in Vancouver who were so cool. They were really into In The Red and garage. They came to our show in Seattle the day after our show in Vancouver. They drove like three and a half hours, which was so awesome.
Katy: They are in a band called Dead Ghosts.
Frankie: They were the coolest.
Cassie: They love to drink Sparks. They were like, "you can't get Sparks in Canada." The kids in Lawrence were really cool too.
Katy: We went to two shows and a party with them after our show.
Cassie: A show in a parking garage. It was really nice. It was on the very top and there was this cop car right there, but then the cop drove away.
Katy: No big deal.

MRR: Tell me about it. Did you always want to go on tour?
Cassie: I am really interested in going everywhere in America. One of my life goals is to go to every state, and to know what's in every state, and what there is to do there.
Katy: I love tour more than anything. I love traveling, playing shows, staying with nice strangers, all of it. It's my favorite part of being in a band. We've already done four tours, and we're planning out our fifth and sixth ones right now.
Frankie: I've been touring for years, so at this point I'm just like… whatever.

MRR: What other bands did you tour with?
Frankie: Oh, just… you know, sappy punk bands, crappy punk bands. A band called Shit Storm. You know, just really crappy punk bands. I mean, I've been doing those kinds of tours since I was 22 years old. I'm 29 now, so I don't have a very romanticized idea about touring, necessarily, anymore, but I still do it. I enjoy some aspects of it.

MRR: Was this tour different from the other ones?
Frankie: No. I mean, a little actually… This one was a little more comfortable for me. The other tours that I did were like not very comfortable. I mean, punk houses, scabies, etc. There were definitely no scabies involved on this tour.

MRR: Have you ever gotten scabies?
Frankie: Um, no comment.

MRR: Number one fear.
Frankie: So, you know, I have to lay down a few rules for myself, which is, I want to be comfortable, I want to be in a place where I can actually sleep at night. I don't do well without any sleep these days.
Katy: We slept in a lot of beautiful places.
Frankie: We really did. I brought an air mattress. It was pretty cool.
Katy: We also made sure to eat at least one good meal a day. My favorite restaurant on tour is this place called Magnolia in Austin. They have this stuff called Mag-Mud. It's delicious. It's queso mixed with black beans mixed with avocado mixed with salsa. We devoured it.

MRR: Did you play Chaos in Tejas this year?
Cassie: Yes.

MRR: How was that?
Katy: It was actually at an outside stage at a neighboring venue with Japanther and the Pharmacy, a short walk from the rest of the fest. Nashville Pussy was playing the inside stage, though, so that was kind of weird. Some really weird fans kept drifting between the two stages and being weird at us.

MRR: That's a punk and hardcore festival. Do you guys have anything in common with any of those bands?
Katy: Not a whole lot, but we have fans that come from lots of different scenes, and we are also interested in a lot of different bands. I saw Crude. That was awesome.

MRR: You guys also did some vocals for Fucked Up. How did that happen?
Katy: Mike asked us if we wanted to sing backups on the new record. He said our reverby-harmonies were creepy in a Manson Family sort of way. We agreed, and then Jonah showed up one day, we went to Jeremy Scott's studio, and we figured out harmonies on two songs.

MRR: Do you like Fucked Up at all?
Katy: Yeah, I think they're a pretty interesting band. They're not scared to go in very strange directions, which is pretty awesome. I'm sure you feel the same.

MRR: I feel the same. I love that band more than anything. I spent the weekend with them this weekend. It was so much fun. What do you imagine is ever going come out of releasing this record?
Katy: What we want, I think, is just for everyone who would like it to hear it. We also get to travel. We'll get to go to the UK in the winter, which will be awesome.

MRR: Do you guys hang out anymore, now that you're in a band?

Katy: For whatever reason, I don't know if we ever spend more than two days apart. We work really hard. I'm married to these girls.
Frankie: We're always together. If we're not together, then we're on the phone for an hour.
Cassie: I talk to Katy every day for at least an hour, no matter what.
Katy: We have no manager, we manage ourselves, and we do a lot. We're really busy.
Frankie: And all of us have band jobs, so we can take care of business.
Cassie: Can I talk about our band jobs? Frankie is Mother-Time, because she always makes sure we get places on time. I'm Paper-Master, because I always have paper and pen and write the set lists. And Katy is Band-Scientist—she can read a map like nobody else. She can do math, we can't.
Katy: I'm always surprised at how much we need a pen and paper, like, all the time.

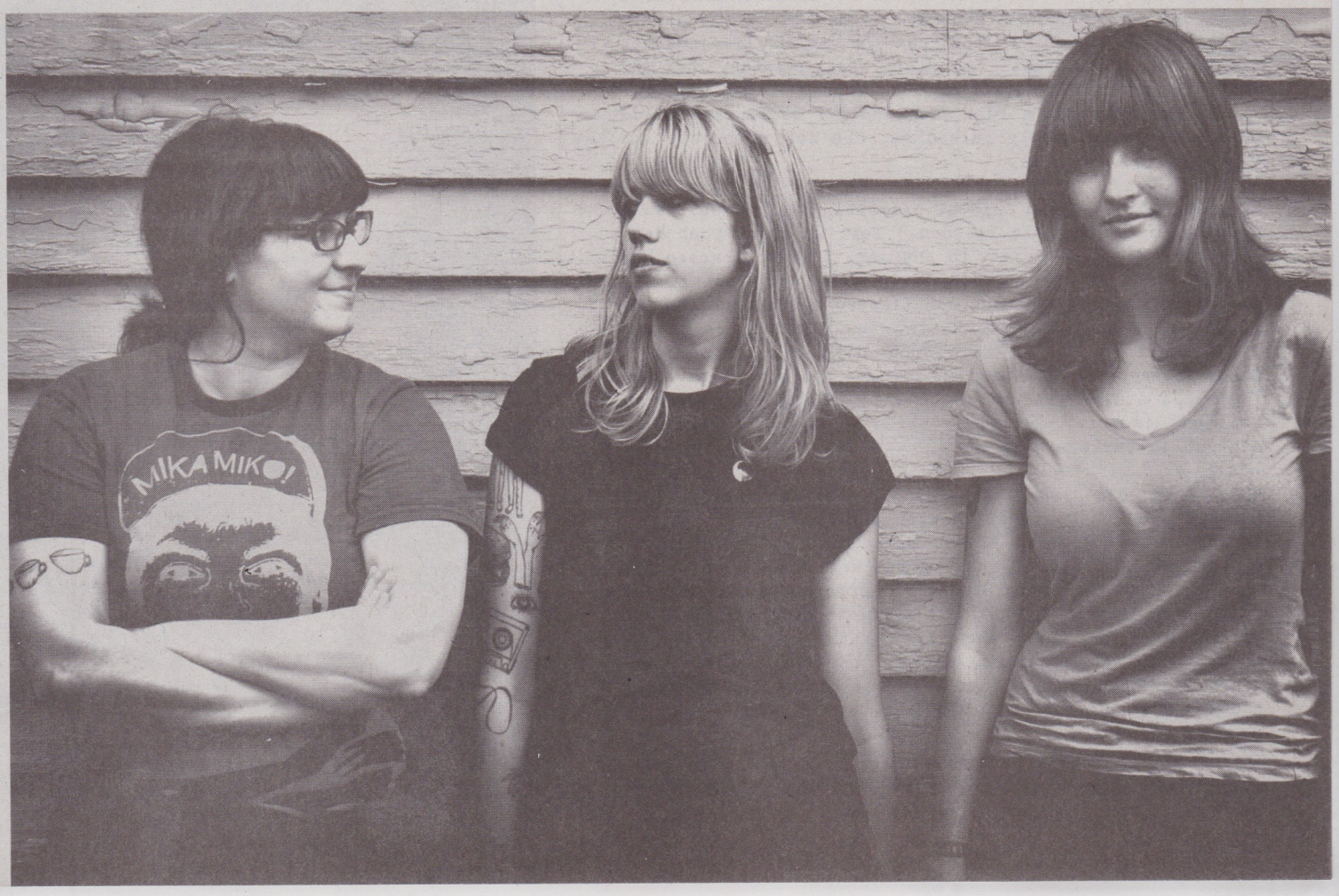
MRR: And also to be places on time?
Cassie: And also to get places. We're a good combo there.
Katy: I think that's actually part of why I love our band. It's like we're not dragging around any rocks. All three of us are seriously motivated, and work really hard all the time. We don't have any drug addictions or alcohol problems or anything like that. We're pretty wholesome girls that get shit done.

MRR: Not very punk, huh?
Frankie: I guess! I don't know how people have a band and drink. I don't know how they get anything done.

MRR: It's very easy for people who are artists to wallow in the romance of creation. So, you don't? So how does this band fulfill yourself personally?
Frankie: I really enjoy writing songs. That's it. I don't really romanticize like I think I romanticized it a lot when I was younger. I had some idea about… something.
Katy: Writing songs is a beautiful process in general, but there's more to a band than writing beautiful songs. There's playing shows, recording records, having friends all over the world.
Frankie: And I think we all do enjoy those different aspects. The social stuff is not my favorite thing necessarily, but you know, Katy's really wonderful at talking to people.
Katy: I really like the technical aspect of figuring out every detail of every show. I could do it for days on end.
Frankie: Cassie just loves to rock. She just really loves to slay on her axe.

MRR: How is it being around each other all the time? Going back to touring, being around each other, knowing that you guys all have your roles, you rely on each other to do things for each other.
Katy: I really do think it's like a marriage. Sometimes there are ups and sometimes there are downs, and we're just totally aware of it.

MRR: No big deal. Would you like to stay married for a while?
Katy: Yeah. I can't imagine doing anything else for, like, a long time. I think that's the reason we're so happy, because we all want to do the same stuff.
Cassie: Vivian Girls!
Katy: We're all on the same page.



NO BUNNY

Armed with only a furry, white bunny mask, a pair of pink panties, and set of knee-pads, Tucson, Arizona's own Nobunny delivers catchy bubblegum punk with a smile and a whole set of spastic dance moves. Nobunny is a seven-year-old jackalope/human that isn't afraid to mingle with the crowd while letting his genitals bounce to the music, which is what he has been doing since his first gig in 2001. Some reports have claimed that Nobunny is actually an alter ego of Justin Champlin, 31, of Okmoniks and Sneaky Pinks fame, though that is yet to be confirmed. When asked about his identity, Nobunny commented, "I have a stupid human mask that I wear sometimes before I go onstage-so I don't get mobbed." While the mystery of his genetics still looms, the music of Nobunny is clearly a pop majesty that could make the Ramones dance in their graves. Non-stop touring and a self-titled, sold out LP later, Nobunny shows no signs of slowing down.
Interview by Richard Tupica

MRR: How would you describe yourself?
Nobunny: I'm that fool in the alley laughing. I'm that body sleeping in the park. I'm a skateboard and a tall-boy.

MRR: What city did you grow up in? What did you do to keep busy as a young lad?
Nobunny: I was born in the desert about 45 minutes outside of Tucson, Arizona, on March 3, 2001. Momma was a jackalope and daddy was a human. People think the desert is all death, when in fact there is a lot of life-jackrabbits, wild dogs, rattlers, scorpions, coyotes, and the moon. The moon is my other mother. I used to set up drums in the desert under a full moon and get weird. My childhood: my sister mainly raised me. She fed me peyote and taught me how to kill.

MRR: According to the Chinese proverb, "A sly rabbit will have three openings to its den." Tell us about your den.
Nobunny: My den is *groady* to the max. I never learned how to take care of myself. I'm surrounded by my own bodily fluids in bottles and cans, on tissues and shirts, on the floor, on plates, on my sheets. The windows are always open, and I do little there other than sleep and creep. I have always had an aversion to home and a need to roam. I'm not a stay-in and watch TV kind of guy. I don't like to speak indoors. Outsider, all the way. The libraries and public parks are my dens.

MRR: When did you first start playing music? What inspired you to get started with the rocking?
Nobunny: I was born an Elvis impersonator. I quickly got bored with the formula and started writing my own songs. The first was "No Bunny Blues." I performed on the street in the big city of Tucson, but my first official show was on Easter 2001 in Chicago. It was the day Joey Ramone died, which was a bummer, but the show had to go on. I did a few originals and covers of the Dictators, Bobbyteens, and the Electric Eels.

MRR: What influences make up Nobunny?
Nobunny: Girls. Girls. Girls. The elements: air, earth, water, and fire. Love. Truth, The moon. As far as music: Hasil Adkins, Lil Bunnies, Albert Ayler, Elvis Presley, the Cramps, Gentleman Jesse, John Battles, ELO.

MRR: Did you ever go to college?
Nobunny: I went for three days. I'm not sure how that happened as I'm only seven and I hate school. It makes me nauseous. To each their own.

MRR: What is a typical day like for you?
Nobunny: I spend most of my time in libraries and public parks. I'm a pretty social fool, but I do spend most of my time alone, either reading, drinking, or sleeping. Or designing my BJ machine.

MRR: What are some records you have been jamming lately?
Nobunny: I only have about twelve records and I never listen to them. I really love music, but I'm really poor and stupid. I almost never listen to music. I don't have a record player, CD player, or even a tape deck. That said, lately I love Cheap Time, Thin Lizzy, and Dreamdate.

photo by Rob Karlic

MRR: Do you plan to keep playing music? Or do you have other aspirations?
Nobunny: I love playing music, and I don't plan on stopping. I wouldn't say I "need to do it," but it would seem silly to stop. I also love goin' to the bone yard with female humans.

MRR: What's up with the new Nobunny LP on Bubbledumb Records? How did that come about?
Nobunny: The record was easy to get released. I just had to say 'YES!' Bubbledumb Records put out the LP and has really great records coming out. The songs were all home-recorded-some with people, but mostly by myself. I'm really touched that people like it at all. I've had a lot of people asking to put out records, and while I certainly want to put out more it takes me awhile because I'm picky about songs and stuff. I'm pretty burnt on bands that put out a billion records a year with only a few good songs between 'em. That said, look for more Nobunny records coming your way soon. Hopefully I can put out some quality as opposed to quantity.

photo by Jason Fisher

MRR: How has this recent tour been going for you?
Nobunny: Touring has been awesome. It's all I really want to do lately. Touring and porkin'. Touring and porkin' and getting high. Touring and porkin' and getting high and eating pizza and pork. I've been on three tours in the last few months and they keep getting better and better. Each one has been crazier than the last. I've had a different lineup each trip. With So Cow I had a band that included Mr. So Cow, Jason Testaseca, and Trent "Dirt Turd" Purdy. When I was out with the Okmoniks I played by myself. On this last tour with the Wax Museums, they backed me up every night. It was so punk you could puke.

MRR: Is there a groupie scene for Nobunny?
Nobunny: Groupies? Sadly, no, but people sure like to grab at my bits and throw spanks at my butt when I'm performing. The closest thing to groupies is probably some fat dudes in Goner shirts. Bless their greasy lil' hearts. Next time I play Portland I've agreed to perform with Dave and Teri's (Slip Its, Tie Reds) new band, the Stuffed Animals, so hopefully we can get some *furverts* out to that one.

MRR: Being a jackalope, was it harder to get a record released? Is there a Nobunny fan club yet?
Nobunny: Well, I'm not fully a jackalope. I'm not really anything when it comes down to it. The only real trouble I've had as far as releasing records is my inability to send people recordings. I have a bunch of fun projects lined up, but I have a serious self sabotage problem. I could have a bunch of records out already, but I'm real picky, which, honestly, I wish more bands were. While I don't think what I've put out is all that hot, at least I don't put out a half-baked 7" a month. Part of me wants to because I realize that these things come and go in phases, and that a year down the line no one will care about me, but I still don't want to just put out any ol' turd. Just golden turds, or at least bronze-shit, what am I talking about? The Nobunny fan club doesn't actually 100 percent exist, but I'd like it to. I got some awesome friends and fans out there.

MRR: Are there any other jackalope/humans that you have encountered? If not, how do you plan to procreate?
Nobunny: While I'm not 100 percent of their exact heritage, there are a whole mess of bunny jerks on this big blue marble. You got your Lil Bunnies, The Rhythm Chicken, and Bun E. Carlos, to name a few. While I think kids are cool, cool, cool, and I love, love, love to love, love, love the ladies, I have no, no, no plans to have this bloodline continue.

MRR: Have you ever encountered any prejudice?
Nobunny: People think I'm a gimmick, a joke, a pig in the poke. I guess I am, but not any more than most of these other jerks in these other jerky bands. You can still be passionate and express yourself without taking yourself real seriously. I'm quite often too honest and open with people, not in the sense of being mean, but more being honest about what I'm like, which is apparently not for everyone. Deep down, I'm a good person, or I try to be and deep down I'm not, or, shit, no, I don't know... I just know that some fools like me and some sure don't. That's okay though, be it prejudice or not. I get called a "fag" here and there, but I don't really care. Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke. They are the joke. They are the enemy. I am the cookie monster. Only I'm more like the sex monster, the drunk-sex monster, the drunk-sex monster in your closet, the drunk-sex monster in your closet breathing to the beat. I live the life I love, and I love the life I live, c'mon.

MRR: What is Nobunny's ultimate goal in life?
Nobunny: Endless Summer. Ultimate Scummer. No Bummers. But seriously folks, I'd just like to keep touring and playing for peeps, playing for keeps. Know what I mean? Tour, tour, tour.

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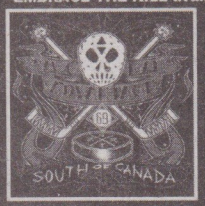

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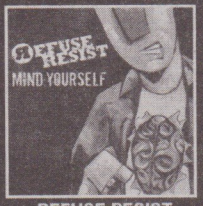

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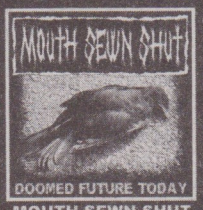

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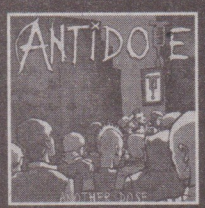

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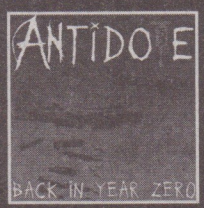

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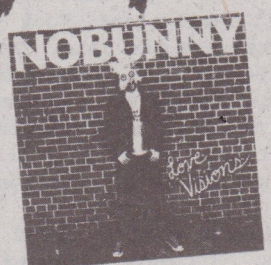

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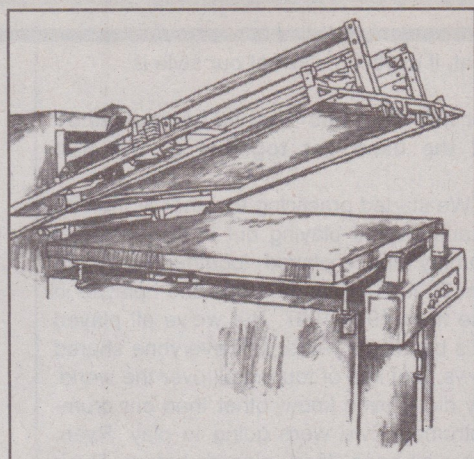

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97-SHIKI

The people in 97-shiki have been playing together in various bands and the Chicago scene for years, but have only started playing out as 97-SHIKI this past spring. 97-shiki plays punk in a fashion that is sort of discordant, yet seamless and not easily pigeonholed into your hundred and one sub-genres (they don't want you to!). They hope to bring their past musical experiences together to birth a monster of a new kind, resulting in a brilliant cacophony one might even describe as "beautiful fucking noise." 97-shiki is Patrick Scott – guitar, Ryan Durkin – vocals, Kammy Lee – drums, Douglas Ward – bass and vocals
Interview and introduction by Cher from Two Seconds Notice *zine. Photos by Brian Louis*

MRR: What in the world is "97-shiki"? Can you please explain?
Douglas: It is an odd name. "Shiki" is a Japanese word for "type" or "system" or "series" or "model," so 97-shiki means sort of "System-97" or "Number-97." It doesn't really mean anything other than we like it because it doesn't sound like any other band name.

MRR: In your own words, how would you describe the style of music you play? What spurred you to play this particular style?
Douglas: Maybe it's easier to describe what we're trying to do, musically, instead. When we got together to form the band, none of us were saying. "Let's do a band that sounds like...hardcore / noise / grunge / crustcore / hip-hop..." Also, we knew that none of us wanted to pick a musical genre and stay inside those lines. We all share a drive to make loud, weird, sharp, angry, smart music and that's what is coming out so far. But it is a real mix of all our past bands' sounds. Personally, I am tired of bands that think punk is a sound, pick their favorite "style," and emulate it. Punk was born out of *not* copying the stuff that came before, not trying to fit in, and about being original and taking chances. I love old punk, and I've been doing various sounding bands for over 25 years, but I don't want to copy anything or repeat things I've done before. Change and taking chances is what I think all of us are interested in doing, and so that, if anything, is what our style is.

MRR: For how long has 97-shiki been playing? How did the band get together in the first place?
Douglas: We started practicing together at the end of 2007, and started playing out in the spring of 2008. Kammy and I played together in Fourth Rotor from 2000-2006, and Patrick and I played in V Reverse from 1995-1997. But we've all played shows with each other's bands for years, and everyone shared a desire to do DIY shows, and lots of touring all over the world, if possible. We actually didn't even know, other than our drummer Kammy, what instruments we were going to play. Ryan, Patrick, and myself have all been "lead" singers before. Ryan played bass in another band once, and I've played guitar in all my other bands before this. Now I play bass, and do backup vocals, Ryan sings, Patrick does guitar, and Kammy drums.

MRR: Are there any releases, and if not, are there any plans for such?
Douglas: We're recording in a few days for our first release, which will be a 7" also available as a digital download.
Patrick: We live in an incredibly interesting time in the regard of music format. In the US many people have mp3 players and at least some easy access to computers. The major labels are freaking out because resourceful kids and students have figured out how to completely subvert the way music is sold. This is kind of liberating, as it means that now, we get to set up our own rules and can take more control of how we make our music/art available to people and what the final medium is. For example, the label that I am a part of (who is releasing the 97-shiki 7") has made the decision to stop doing CDs and focus mainly on vinyl and digital downloads, including a download with the vinyl so people who have mp3 players and turntables don't have to buy the record twice. Further, I've been thinking and am starting a "sister" label, which will have every effort made to be environmentally sustainable. The idea is to not use any plastic and no less than 70% recycled paper. The releases will be made available as a card that has artwork and a download code printed on it. This is contained in a CD sized jacket with artwork and notes/lyrics, etc. A person could download the music in whatever file form the artist chooses (i.e. a video, mp3, or more high resolution file like aiff, etc). Granted, access to computers is a major component to this idea, but the label will be focused mostly on experimental electronic music where most of the listeners are using computers anyway. If it works out, I'll most likely start releasing recordings in this format on both labels.

MRR: Most of you are obviously gaining in age. What's it like playing music associated with

youth? Are you still excited about music?

Kammy: When I was younger I did actually think that when I got older I'd have to stop being involved in music and punk/underground culture, and start doing "older people stuff," whatever that was. Well obviously that hasn't happened. Music is part of who I am. As for age, it's just a number.

Patrick: I realized rather early on that punk wasn't the music, it *is* the idea, the motivation, the inspiration, the ethic, the community. It is a wonderful thing to be in environments where people are as passionate about their beliefs and feelings as you are. That's what drew me into this world when I was younger, and it's why I continue to participate.

Douglas: We all are passionate about music and that's how we express our views of the world, ourselves, life, politics, people, etc. But it's not just music; it's the DIY scene, the people, the underground/counterculture that I need to keep involved in, help grow, and watch evolve. This sort of thing starts for most people when they're still kids or very young, and a lot of people fade out of it as they get older. I don't see any reason why age has to be a reason to stop. If anything, I'm personally more confident in doing this, more inspired, and more focused.

MRR: You have plans to tour Southeast Asia at the end of the year. Have you toured elsewhere prior to this?

Douglas: This will be our first tour, as we're very new. It is weird to us, and all our friends, that our first tour is one of the most far away tours possible. We haven't even toured the US, but when the chance came up—through Ryan's friendship with Arwith of Utarid Booking—we jumped at it. It's obviously not about money—the airfare sucks, and it is very expensive, and we're going to lose a lot of money doing it. We're saving up, and going into debt to make it happen. For myself, meeting all the people and seeing all the bands, and learning about new places and getting to make our noise in front of them is one of the best things to do in this world. But who knows when we'll get another chance, and if we can do it, it will be worth it. And with friends in the scene all over the world, in Finland, Brazil, Mexico, Macedonia, we hope we can get to as many far away places as possible.

MRR: Having spent most of your lives involved in punk, would it be fair for you to compare then and now? What kind of future do you see for punk?

Douglas: That's a huge question. In some ways, it hasn't changed very much at all. There are still new people coming into it, setting up house/basement shows, and trying to figure out how to express their anger, frustration, and passions with loud music—or sometimes, its soft music, and dressing weird, and finding a voice to protest/promote something they feel strongly about. Much of that is the same, and that's great. But what has changed is the mainstream perception of "punk" and the word itself. When it first became a thing (before I was doing it) it was an unknown, and no one outside of "punk" knew what it was, and it was scary and weird. Today, it has been around so long, that the "visible" elements of it have become cliches: mohawks, spiky leather jackets, safety pin earrings, etc. And there's a lot of veneration for the old "classic" bands, and people end up copying them, or trying to sound just like them. Doing all that might be a way to get excited about it, and to learn about when you first get into, and that's fine. But when you think about how all those "classic" bands were great because they said, "Fuck heroes, fuck rock stars —we're going to make up our *own* shit our way," well then you can see that playing dress up and re-writing old songs is pretty silly. The bands that have inspired me the most are the ones that were weird and different from the stuff around them, while they were in it: the Minutemen, Captain Beefheart, Devo, Nomeansno, Nation Of Ulysses, the Ex, Melt Banana, etc. I love old punk, but I love it because when it was new it was challenging the stuff around it. I've always tried to make music that is inspired by stuff before it, but doesn't imitate it. I hope I've succeeded somewhat.

MRR: So it seems like you are pro-download. What do you think of DIY that are against it and consider it non-supportive of what the bands are doing? What happens when kids see downloading as the sole medium to acquiring more music?

Patrick: I am pro-download because I see the potential in it as a format. I am also a sound engineer (live, recording, etc.), and know that the mp3 is not the be all end all of audio formats. They sound terrible, but so do cassettes, CDs, and poorly mixed, mastered, and pressed vinyl. I also feel that the use of audio files decreases or offsets the amount of waste generated by the tons by CDs and vinyl pressed every year. If people want to download music, cool, I hope you pay for it, that's how labels can afford to put out more records. That's the aspect I feel that needs to be addressed. That buying an mp3 is technically the same as buying a record in the store—everyone gets their cut (store/distro/label/band)—or if a band or label sets up a download store on their own all the money goes to them, cool. We're in an incredible time—we get to basically restructure the "music industry paradigm." We're able to pick how we want to acquire music! "Illegal downloads" are freaking people out the same way that blank cassettes were back in the '80s, but I'll tell you, I got into a lot of music by having someone put some songs on a tape for me. Especially

records that were way out of print. Support bands, support labels if you're involved with and care about underground music/culture. Treat it like the sweat-soaked treasure that it is, not like a pop record that exists only to sell itself.

Kammy: I don't see any point in being "anti-download." Downloading exists and is not going to go away. Bands and labels need to find a way to make it work for them, for example by setting up download stores. Downloading for free also has benefits. When Douglas and I were in our previous band Fourth Rotor, we used to put up songs on our web site for people to download for free. Not only did people still purchase our records and CDs, but we had numerous people tell us that they came to a show to see us because they listened for free on our site, and liked what they heard. In my opinion, the uproar over "illegal downloading" is vastly overblown. I think there are two types of people who download music without paying. There are the people who won't pay for it, and there are the people who can't pay for it. The first type of people won't pay for music no matter what. They were never going to buy it in the first place. They're taking it because it's free—they don't care about supporting the bands, and they never will. But the second type of people don't pay because they can't afford it. That's the type of person I was as a young kid, taping songs off the radio, or making a tape of a tape from one of my friends. But when I did get a job and some money, I wanted to own a better copy of the music that I liked, with the album artwork, lyrics, etc, so I ended up buying the real records. In the meanwhile, I had become a fan of these bands. So was I "stealing music"? I guess so, but I also became a music lover who was more than willing to support the bands that I cared about by buying their music and going to see them play live. As a musician, I want that type of person to hear my music. I want them to listen, much more than I want to worry about squeezing every last drop of money out of them.

MRR: What is your opinion of older "jaded" punks dropping out after they hit a certain age?

Douglas: People's lives are complicated, and I don't think I can judge whether people should or shouldn't be doing zines or going to shows or whatever. All I can say is that doing bands and participating in DIY culture still is huge in my life, and I can't see that stopping. If anything, it's grown as I get older.

Kammy: That doesn't seem to be much of an issue here in the Chicago scene. There are people of all ages being active and making things happen—whether they are playing in bands, running labels, booking shows, writing zines, creating art, or whatever.

MRR: Are any of you currently involved in anything else besides 97-shiki (other bands, solo projects, art, political organizing, zines, record labels/distros, etc)? Can you tell me more about these?

Ryan: I also play in Hewhocorrupts and Iron Reminders. I help run a label called Hewhocorrupts Inc. Both the label and band counterpart have been around since the late '90s. Iron Reminders started in late 2007 and has members of defunct Chicago bands like the Letterbombs and No Funeral. Give me a year and I will finally put together my zine solely dedicated to roller coasters.

Douglas: I've been playing guitar in a band called Days Off, but they are currently on hiatus. I was part of a collective record label, along with Kammy and Patrick, called Underdog Records, from about 1990-1997. We did a distro, a zine, and helped put out *Book Your Own Fuckin' Life* #2 with *Maximum Rocknroll*. It was all collective, and all about empowering other people in our scene to learn how to express themselves through records and zines and such. When it started becoming more of a record "business," we ended the distro, then the label, and the zine went on for another couple years. I also did audio mastering for local bands and labels up until this year.

Kammy: 97-shiki is the only band I'm involved with at the moment. I'm also working on becoming a published author. I have several completed novels and short stories, as well as various other works in progress. My writing is speculative fiction and deals with a variety of social and political themes.

Patrick: I also am a member of the band Locks, which is a duo formed by a friend and myself around the idea of taking our DIY ethic and punk background, but adding our other musical influences to it and completely re-thinking the way we play music. I'm also the ringleader of the Static Station Records collective, a label I started in 1997 and turned into a collective with some fellow Chicagoans last year. I have also started a new label called Fissure Recordings, which is a label based more on "experimental music" and being environmentally sustainable with it's releases. I also make sound art and experimental music by myself under the name So/On and with various collaborators. I spend some time dabbling in video and filmmaking. Plus, I spend countless months of the year examining the highway-side rest stops and rock venues of the world as a touring sound engineer.

MRR: Do your personalities/ideas ever clash? If so, how do you go about resolving these differences?

Ryan: Sometimes Douglas tells me that he thinks he's smarter then me because he's a better computer programmer. I resolve this by sending him a virus.

Kammy: We've all known each other for years before we started this band, and so far, we've all continued to get along. I'm sure differences will come up, but we'll be able to resolve them peacefully. Either that or we'll all strangle each other.

MRR: So, why music? Why not start a political collective/organization?

Douglas: Music is the core release for me. I need to write songs and vent my head at the world—there's no question of not doing that for

me. I've always felt that by conducting your band in a positive, socially aware, and progressive way, you help spread those values to other, especially newer or younger bands and people you encounter. I think that making music, setting up shows and tours, releasing records, in a non-music business way is a *great* example to people who never thought they could create their own art and ideas, and communicate it to other people, outside of the mainstream money/business culture. In a way, it's the most basic lesson of expression and empowerment, and I take that very seriously.

Patrick: To me, politics are so personal that to wave a flag and have it represent someone else's ideas seems empty. I feel that I live a rather politically and socially aware life, but I can't ever see myself writing a political manifesto and expect someone else to feel exactly the same way I do. With music and art I feel I can work out my own ideas and maybe sharing them will spark an idea in someone else, then they'll make something and that will inspire someone else and so on. Maintaining a sense of inspiration and empowerment is how I feel a better world will be created.

Kammy: That depends on what kind of effect you want to have. I don't view the goals of political groups and those of bands as being necessarily synonymous. If you are involved in the punk and underground scene then, yes, there are very often goals, values and opinions that both types of groups have in common. They are closely related things that are often found together. Both seek to inspire and to change things, but I wouldn't ever say that one is more effective than the other—we need both. There's something intangible and highly personal about being inspired by music and art, whether creating it or listening to it or experiencing it. Something that, for me at least, is entirely separate from any political views or convictions I hold. I do have definite political views that I feel strongly about, but I tend to express them in other ways. With music I feel that I'm more of an artist than an activist, but I guess you can't ever really separate the two—politics is in everything.

MRR: Does the whole "ex-members of..." thing affect the way you play in 97-shiki? Do you think it is a boon, or that your past work casts a shadow on what you are doing now?

Ryan: The ex-member thing doesn't really bother me. I like having people know what bands we were/are in because I think in a weird way, 97-shiki sounds like what I'd envision all those bands smashed together would sound like. If people think they are coming to see a manifestation of only one of the bands we used to play in they will be disappointed. And I'm extremely happy that we are not a manifestation of only one of those ex-member bands—that would be a waste.

Douglas: You're referring to that huge list of "we were in these bands..." thing we had on our website for a while. That was sort of an inside joke—we were amused at the crapload of bands we've been part of over the years, and when we put that up, we didn't really have any demo songs, or photos, or anything to put on our site. I don't really want anyone to judge my current band on stuff I've done before—97-shiki is about 97-shiki, what we sound like now and what we're doing now. It's not trying to sound like or copy any of our previous stuff.. That's actually one of my favorite things about going on tour to places we've never been—being the unknown band. No one knows us or knows anything about us, so when we play, they either like us or hate us based on what we sound like and act like. It's a clean slate.

Patrick: Everything we've done in the past has put us where we are now. Sometimes 97-shiki songs remind me of songs by bands I used to play in, and I find it interesting to revisit a theme, but for the most part the "ex-members of..." thing is just a way for me to see some friends I haven't seen in years because they remember the names of my old bands.

MRR: Since the majority of you have gone through the different evolutions of punk, especially having gone through wave after wave of technology, what are your respective opinions on MySpace?

Douglas: The MySpace question is interesting. The issue, of course, is that MySpace is owned by News Corp, lead by the fascist Rupert Murdoch. And therefore, there are many people who feel that bands that use MySpace are supporting Murdoch and his right-wing media endeavors. At the same time, MySpace has become the go-to source for bands, and inter-band communication, and it is hard for bands *not* to participate.

MySpace made adding text, pictures and sound to the web free and easy, and so bands that lacked technical skills flocked to it. I don't think that most bands using it cared two shits about the crappy advertisements or the other stuff—it was just a tool to put their stuff on the web. Later, when News Corp bought MySpace, it was so deeply entrenched in band/music culture, that only a few bands decided to leave it. For most bands, it was their only web presence, and now it facilitates tons of scene communication. Knowledge of alternatives doesn't come to everyone at once—people who know about them need to educate other people who don't. 25 years ago, almost no one in the underground knew how to put out a record, and now everyone does. We in the underground/DIY need to teach each other about web/internet alternatives the same way we've learned about records, zines, book publishing, setting up venues, etc.

97-shiki uses our own web page as our first web place, and MySpace as our second. MySpace for us is just a way to direct people to our real site. We do the blog posts on

MySpace, but they say, "We just posted blah blah on our *real* website, here's the link..." I think we should start getting more explicit in saying things like, "*You don't need MySpace to get on the web*", and pointing our how lame News Corp is. All the positives that come from people communicating in the underground scene are huge and numerous, and we can't just cut that off and judge everyone who is using it as wrong and bad.

I'm a big enthusiast in the idea of the internet as a decentralized, democratized medium for communication. It still is in many ways, but that part is shrinking, and the corporate side is growing. People who care about that need to take the time to learn about internet technology, and how to take control of it themselves. The internet has drastically changed how we book tours, communicate ideas and music. It has been a huge help in all those things, and has made that possible in ways that it would have been practically un-doable before. So, we still use MySpace, while hoping that we can help encourage people to move off of it, and encourage bands and other elements of the scene to take control of their communication by controlling their own servers and their own sites.

Patrick: As an idea, MySpace is pretty brilliant. As a technology it is flawed. As the manifestation of corporate marketing research that it has been since its inception (long before it was purchased by News Corp), it's disgusting. It's an odd thing. There is an anti-MySpace movement with good reason, it gets individuals to voluntarily write down their interests in order for its parent company to know how to turn individuals into demographics and then sell whatever the company wants to them. It is market research, advertising, and manipulation under the guise of "friends" and "interests." For every hit the site gets that's more money it can charge various business entities to advertise on the site, and more money made for News Corp. So, by even having a page, not ever clicking on any ads, or going to any MySpace sponsored events, or selling any of your music through the site, you're still making some amount of money (albeit, rather indirectly) for News Corp. So why after all that do we (97-shiki) and most every other project I am involved with have a MySpace page? Good question. The only reason I find it appealing is that there is an established infrastructure where people can listen to music, watch videos, read information, and contact each other all in one space. This is pretty valuable to a band, filmmaker, or artist who is trying to establish or maintain a connection with their peers/audience. To me it's deeper than MySpace; it's the commodification of ideas, ideals, and community. We are being exploited in various ways most every minute of the day, especially when it involves the internet. There are corporate ties to most commonly used "social networking" websites, and they are all trying to figure out how to "own the internet." Right now I don't know what the solution is. I know MySpace isn't it, but I feel it might be a tiny step towards a better option. Aside from that, I recommend going outside, reading a book, making a song, a film, a painting, or a *real* friend—that is all much more inspiring to me than anything involving any kind "social networking" website.

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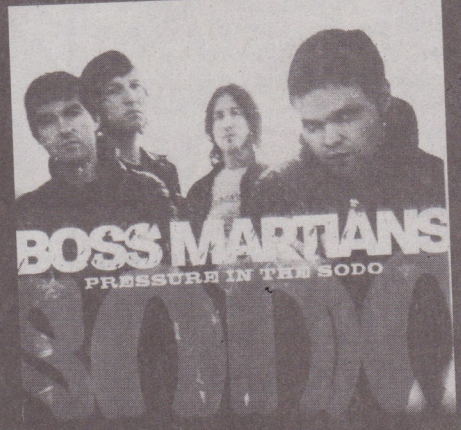

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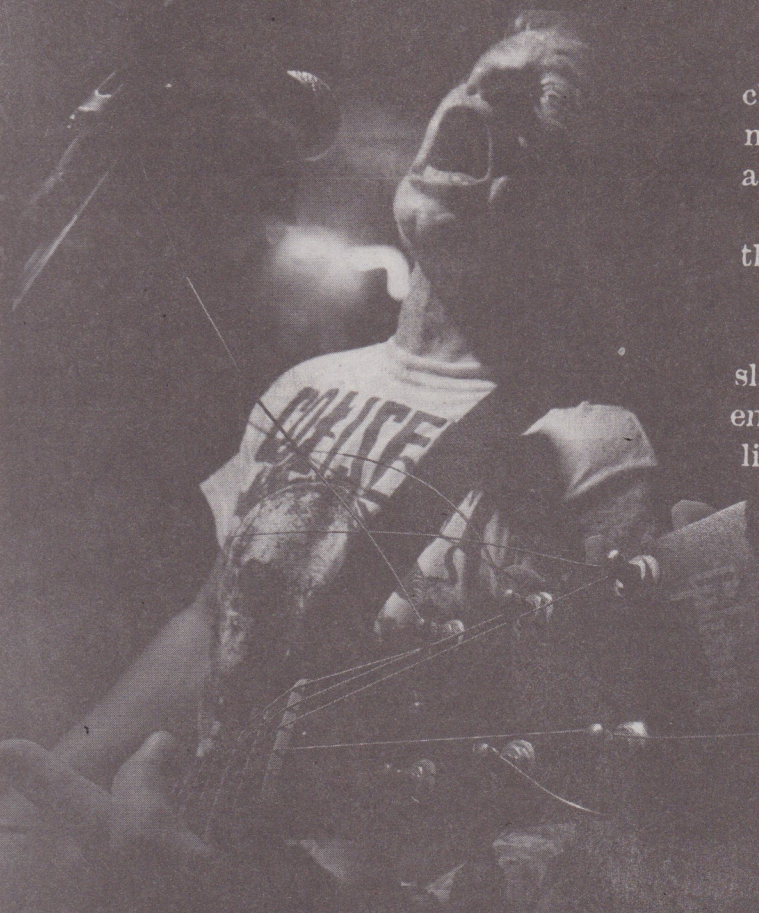


Call it "memory leftovers" from a childhood full of arms races and horror movies, but I have frequent daydreams about the end of the world. Here's how it usually plays out: the countries of the world bomb each other to oblivion, but somehow a few friends and I survive. In the pre-apocalypse, I'm a slave to convenience and cable, but the end times test my mettle and I learn to live off of the land. A compound is built in the desert where we take in survivors and square off against nomadic gangs. I'll need a house band that can rally the troops, yet remind them that we don't have forever... I think I've found it in Ohio's

black dove

(Interview by Denis Carey • Photos by Dave Sanders - brooklyndiy.blogspot.com)

MRR: Black Dove's songs paint a bleak future...should humans just give up now?

Dennis (guitarist/vocalist): Absolutely not. The whole idea behind the *No Future/No Fate* 12" is recognizing that as things are, it is true we have no future, but at the same time, our fate is not set in stone. We have to believe in the eternal underdog. What else is there to live for but lost causes and out of reach dreams?

MRR: Should we even try for out of reach dreams when the apocalypse is around the corner?

Dennis: Who knows what will happen or when, hell, humanity may continue limping on for centuries to come. It's all up in the air, in my opinion, until the scattering occurs (if humanity spreads to other planets). I do know that if you don't follow your dreams, you might as well die now.

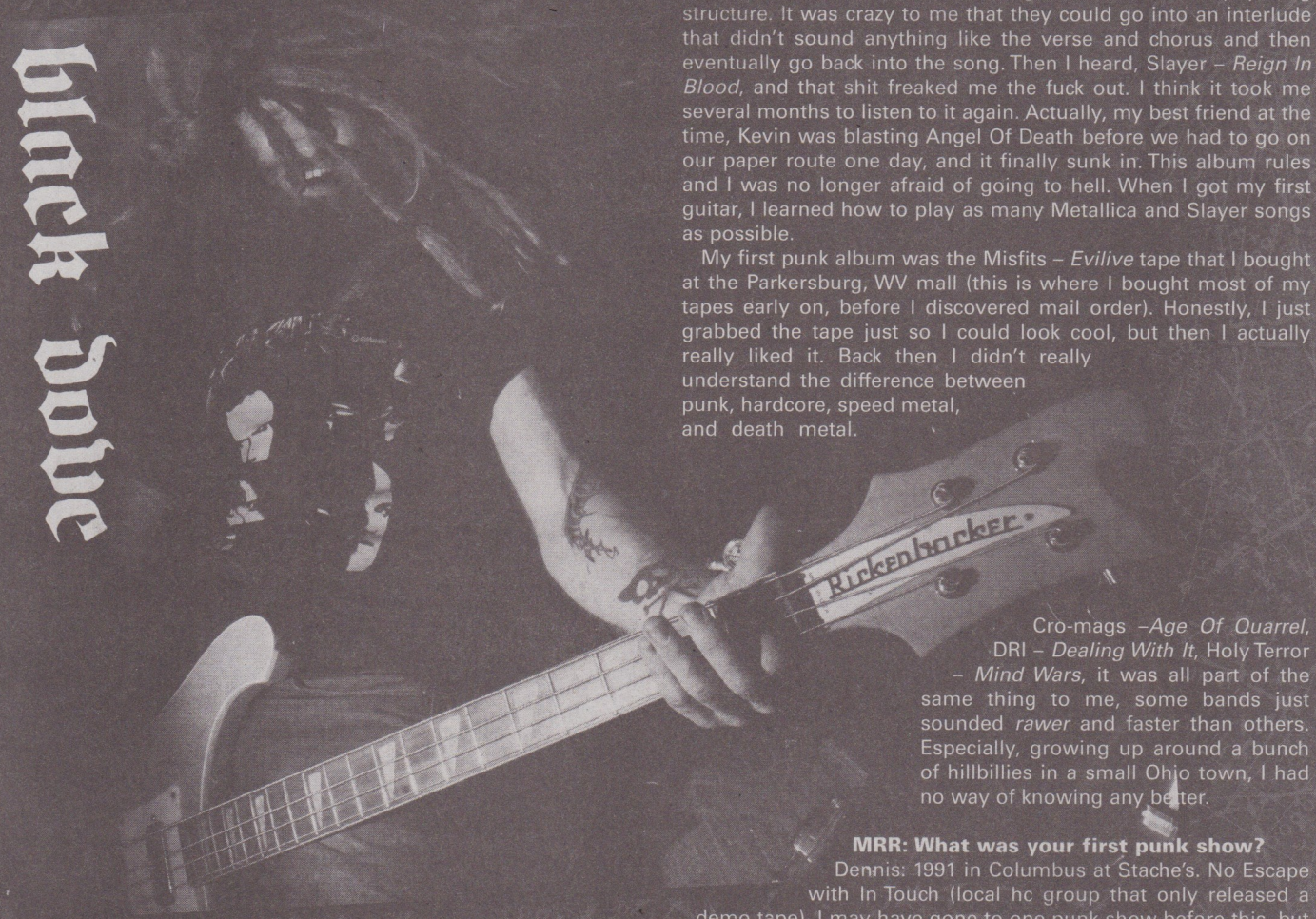
MRR: Tell me a bit about the new Black Dove record, *No Future/No Fate*.

Dennis: Well, I can only speak for myself, but musically, I wanted to make a 12" 45 that is relentless but at the same time, draws on several influences while maintaining the same ambiance. I wanted to capture the ferocious, single-minded feel of great 12" records like Wolfpack – *All Day Hell*, Nightmare – *Give Notice Of Nightmare*, Entombed – *Left Hand Path*, Disclose – *Nightmare Or Reality*, Martyrdöd – *In Extremis*, Discharge – *Why*, Slayer – *Hell Awaits*, Framtid – *Under The Ashes*, while at the same time, making sure that all the songs are completely different. Obviously, I am not stupid enough to think that our record can stand with such greats, but I am pretty happy with the job that we did.

Lyrically, it's pretty bleak, like you mentioned. Basically, when most of the lyrics were written, I was adjusting to just having moved 45 minutes away from Columbus, to a town where I didn't know anyone. I was feeling pretty cut off from the life that I previously knew, so the fucked up happenings in the world were affecting me more negatively than they normally would. The Iraq "war" was in full swing and there I was living in small town Ohio, surrounded by a bunch of hillbillies that thought "Shock And Awe" was a success. Yeah I know, poor me, people are dying for oil and there I am, moping about it. The point is, when I lived in Athens or Columbus, OH, I at least had some outlets where I could do something positive. Here, this is not the case, so naturally, it manifested itself in my lyrics. I awoke from this funk when Black Dove played our first shows, in Philadelphia and NYC with you guys (Fighting Dogs). It was a small, but significant reminder that there were other people in the world that cared.

MRR: But there is definitely an apocalyptical theme to this record, no? Is that your vision of the future, or just the influence of '80s metal and horror movies?
Dennis: Yes, of course. Like I said, as things are, we have no future. But at some points, what is yet to be and the present become one. You look outside and you see skeletons walking around the desolate landscape. Often, I find it difficult to interact within a place that looks dead already, and naturally my lyrics tend to reflect that.

MRR: How do you cope? What gets you up in the morning?
Dennis: Ha, this sounds like I am walking around all the time with a frown on my face! For the most part, the only thing that is hard to cope with is work and the mutants that I have to deal with there. But if you want to know what I live for: Amanda, friends, nature, enjoying music (creating, playing, listening), and anything positive that I can do against this hell that is constantly knocking on our door.



MRR: Let's change the subject a bit...I know that the band really works on their sound. Would you consider yourself a "gearhead"? Have you found that, recently, more bands are paying attention to this than punk bands have previously?
Dennis: We are deliberate about our sound and realize that it plays a large role in the ambiance of the noise, music, whatever you want to call it. It's a larger part of how bands communicate than most people think. I'm not a gear snob by any means, but I do get excited when bands are using cool old tube amps instead of the same old Marshalls or Mesa Boogies. It does seem like more people are starting to pay more attention to the type of amp they use, but it's kind of a trendy thing, also. Who cares if your doom band uses a '70s Sunn model T and Orange 4x12s if you don't make the effort to make it sound good or, even worse, don't put any life into your music?

I don't think I would consider myself a gearhead. I like my Hiwatt head and '71 V4, but if I had to choose between my amp and a Tofu sandwich at Fu Wah, I would go for the tofu sandwich.

MRR: Fu Wah?!? Look at you reppin' Philly...
Dennis: Seriously, it's all I care about when I get into town. Travis [Dismal bass player] sent us to another place in South Philly, he said it was the same thing... *wrong*.

MRR: A young Dennis is running around the woods of Ohio and getting into trouble—what's the record you heard that made you want to play music? And which one got you into punk?
Dennis: Oddly enough, I wasn't real interested in music until kind of late... Until I started skateboarding. A friend of mine, Mike Guckert, stole a Metallica – *Master Of Puppets* tape from his older brother and gave it to me. The speed and song structures blew me away. It was fucked up to hear a song that didn't follow a pop song structure. It was crazy to me that they could go into an interlude that didn't sound anything like the verse and chorus and then eventually go back into the song. Then I heard, Slayer – *Reign In Blood*, and that shit freaked me the fuck out. I think it took me several months to listen to it again. Actually, my best friend at the time, Kevin was blasting Angel Of Death before we had to go on our paper route one day, and it finally sunk in. This album rules and I was no longer afraid of going to hell. When I got my first guitar, I learned how to play as many Metallica and Slayer songs as possible.

My first punk album was the Misfits – *Evilive* tape that I bought at the Parkersburg, WV mall (this is where I bought most of my tapes early on, before I discovered mail order). Honestly, I just grabbed the tape just so I could look cool, but then I actually really liked it. Back then I didn't really understand the difference between punk, hardcore, speed metal, and death metal.

Cro-mags –*Age Of Quarrel*, DRI – *Dealing With It*, Holy Terror – *Mind Wars*, it was all part of the same thing to me, some bands just sounded *rawer* and faster than others. Especially, growing up around a bunch of hillbillies in a small Ohio town, I had no way of knowing any better.

MRR: What was your first punk show?
Dennis: 1991 in Columbus at Stache's. No Escape with In Touch (local hc group that only released a demo tape). I may have gone to one punk show before this, but I can't really remember. Prior to that, I had only been to metal shows. It didn't even occur to me that Columbus would have a punk scene. I believe this was the same No Escape tour that has the honor of Tom Hoofman's [former Fighting Dogs/RAMBO drummer Todd Hoffman] first punk show as well.

How did Black Dove come to form?
Dennis: I met the others through one of my previous bands, The Awakening. We were only a couple hours away from Cincinnati, where their old band, The Dead Hate the Living was from. Obviously, the two scenes intermingle a good bit. Brian (ex-guitar player) had an internship in Columbus and neither of us had any bands going on at the time, so what the hell? At the beginning, Black Dove was pretty much The Dead Hate The Living minus a guitar player and singer and plus me.

MRR: What have you learned from playing in bands for so long? Have you approached Black Dove differently from past projects?
Dennis: I would say the largest thing is the advent of the internet. Before, shows and tours were set up by writing letters and calling people. Actually, I just paid off a long distance bill from 1994, when I set up an old band's US and Canadian tour. The bill was over $300, and I just didn't pay it, because I couldn't afford it at the time. Then, last year, the bastards caught up with me!

It's kind of funny, the prevailing theory is that back then, you had to "work harder" to stay on top of what was going on in DIY punk: by reading zines, writing letters, trading tapes, mail ordering, etc. Everything wasn't found by the click of a mouse. So you would think that there would be less flaky/sketchy people around... *wrong*! I think many of the basics still hold true, you need to be careful of who sets up your shows and who puts out your records.

MRR: Do you see being over 30 and still playing in punk bands as a lost cause and therefore something worthy to live for?
Dennis: I wouldn't go that far! Just by writing new songs, playing shows, and hanging out with my friends I am fulfilling some of my dreams. Obviously, my dreams don't stop there, but this is one of the things that keep me going...a normalizing aspect of my life, if you will. I can't envision my life without it.

MRR: Can you see yourself ever not being part of punk? Maybe when you're really old and gray?
Dennis: It has been a part of my life for so long, I can't picture not being able to be around other people that believe in DIY and anti-authoritarianism in some way or another.

Another funny thing is that you would think that the information age would make the DIY scenes larger and stronger since more people can easily find out about things that are going on. I think everyone pretty much knows that this isn't true either. It seems like peoples' involvement ends up being even more fleeting than it was before. Sure, a shit ton of "bands" can throw up their recordings on the internet and instantly have hundreds / thousands of people hear it. But what do you really gain from that? The sense of community, communication, or connectivity isn't anywhere near the same as actually mailing a record or tape to someone with a letter and maybe some show posters or whatever else you feel like throwing in the package.

MRR: What's in the future for Black Dove?
Dennis: We're going to chill out on playing shows for the next couple months so we can get the time to make new songs for 2 new 7"s. One will be released by the wonderful Slow Gold Zebra label. Our 12" just came out this summer, during our tour with France's Gasmask Terrör (great band, great people), so maybe the EPs will come out around the end of the year? We may do another small tour in 2009, but we're not exactly sure what's going on with that, yet. Our other bands have some stuff coming out soonish—Paralyzer is doing a one sided 12" and NukkeHammer, a tape.

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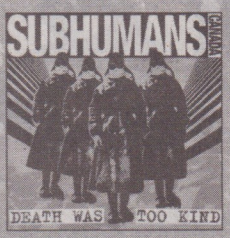

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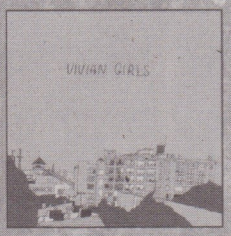

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SLOW MOTION SUICIDE:

The Story of

Assassins

By Lance Hahn

Assassins of Hope may not be the most positive name in the history of punk band names, but the glib name for the band was misleading for a group that definitely did more than just suggest a positive future. Everything from punk gig etiquette to the Miner's Strike was up for debate and commentary, as even an early live recording from the Pied Bull in London on the 9th of August, 1982 has the band interacting and responding to what was happening in the audience. Though it's not entirely clear what is going on, the group is speaking between songs with the crowd, making dedications, a few in-jokes, and the crowd is responding in kind. But the moment the chat is over, each song is a solid, well-played block of driving punk diversified by male and female vocals switching off and a concise rhythm section barreling forward.

Leon (bassist): "I look back with a mixture of emotions at Assassins of Hope. It was my first band, so I have fond memories of playing gigs and writing songs for the first time. There was lots of energy. We had loads of ideas and were committed to our political/social ideals. Most of the time we really enjoyed playing gigs and played with some decent, friendly, like-minded people—though there was also rivalry/disagreements between us and other bands, none of it malicious. I think the music was primitive, much as you'd expect for punk, but otherwise I doubt that we'd have gotten into playing guitars and writing songs. We also were involved in CND, Anarchist Youth Federation, and the squatting movement.

"There were a lot of good vibes between people in those days—everyone was getting a band together, doing a zine, organizing gigs, doing benefits. Mostly everyone got on well and cooperated in creating a good, alternative scene. There were bust-ups and snide remarks and some bands didn't like each other, but there's bound to be some rivalry even if you're idealists (maybe, especially as you're idealists). In some ways it was a bit weird cause we were all about 17 to 18 years old and that's generally a time of finding out who you are—emotionally, politically, spiritually, sexually—yet at times some of the anarchist stuff was a bit like a continuation of my Catholic upbringing—strong belief systems, rituals, symbols, strange vestments, a shit load of 'sins' that should not be transgressed (eating meat, etc., and not just on a Friday). Even the anarchist interpretation of sex seemed quite puritan (where the laudable feminist ideas strayed into male self-loathing)."

Assassins of Hope was the product of two young punk brothers, Mike and Leon.

Leon: "In early 1978 my brother Mike (aged 12—later the Assassins of Hope drummer) and myself (aged 13) began buying punk and new wave records—mainly singles to begin with—the Clash, Ian Dury, the Stooges, Sham 69, etc. Punk music, lyrics, attitude, and style was a revelation. Before punk we'd loved music—the Kinks, Sweet, Slade, etc, but that was really music for a slightly older generation. Now we had our own music that reflected and expressed our own desire for truth, honesty, freedom, and our hate for authority, conformity, the police, school, religion. I guess being incarcerated in a Jesuit-run Catholic school gave Mike and me plenty of stuff to reject.

"Well, as time passed we got into more and more punk stuff and started shopping at Small Wonder record shop. This was situated in Walthamstow, East London, just a short bus journey from our house. It was a small independent record shop that stocked every punk record you could ever want. Pete Stennet, the owner, also ran a record label (called, surprisingly, Small Wonder), which released records by Crass, Fatal Microbes, Cravats, the first Cockney Rejects single, etc.

"Anyway, we'd seen the Crass logo painted on the backs of leather jackets and on walls on tube stations so we bought their first two albums—this was in 1979. Crass' lyrics changed our lives. I suppose I can only speak for myself (I'm not my brother's wicket keeper), but Crass lyrics shocked me into a deeper understanding of how reality is manipulated, controlled, and maintained by the state, corporations, global economic arms trade, etc. (the system, if you will). It sort of flipped the dark underbelly of the world over for me to peer inside. Sure, I'd had a deep-rooted authority for much of my short life, but now I was becoming aware at a much deeper and frankly disturbing level of why I was correct to hate

authority. Among other things, this led us into becoming vegetarians ("war in the bedroom, bodies in the fridge"), we got involved in CND—going on the huge anti-nuclear marches in London in the early '80s, and also becoming involved in our local Youth CND in Walthamstow."

As was the case with many kids getting into punk, it seemed right to at least try to get a band together.

Leon: "The band more emerged than met, in as much as Mike and I were/are brothers, so we met quite regularly already and our guitarist Ivan Oxo was our best mate from school who we'd known since we were at primary school (aged seven, approximately) along with another friend Alex, AKA Victor Mization. We kind of started by pretending to be a band, thinking of band names, nom de plumes, lyrics, flyers, etc., and then we sort of accidentally became a real band by slowly getting dodgy, cheap guitars and amps, even rehearsing. This was 1980-1981. In June '81 we met two of our singers Josie and Chantal at a squat gig with Rubella Ballet and the Mob at the Old Church on Pentonville Road. We met them in the pub and we liked the cut of their gib. They initially agreed to do some poetry to complement Victor's singing but eventually they just became two further vocalists."

So before the end of 1981, Assassins of Hope was formed. Like how the Clash (allegedly) came up with their name, Assassins came from the press.

Leon: "The name (I think) was taken from a newspaper headline—it might have been about the IRA or the Unions or something—and the headline ran along the lines "Are these the Assassins of Hope?" We thought it sounded a good name for a band, as to us, the real Assassins of Hope, were the popes, po-faced politicians, priests, paper pushers, and other oppressors—although they didn't all start with the letter P. I also called myself Leon Hope cause I thought some more hope wouldn't go amiss in the world."

For a more lyrical assessment, you only need look as far as what has been deduced to be some sort of press release for Leon and Mike's later group, Swine.

"Think back...further...no, no...further than that...further...yep, that's it,. Riiiiiight...there. The darker ages—this was a time of *magik* and sorcerey, of dreams and nightmares, of salt and vinegar. The populous were paupers—musically bereft of any sing-a-long choruses, loud crashing of cymbals, and *pling* stringing. Nobody really knew where they came from. They just appeared...like the shopkeeper in "Mr Benn." Nobody paid them very much attention at first, they just sort of blended in with the crowd. Then, one day, it happened. "Mad" Mike Mahon and Leon "Babyface" Hope slaughtered a crowd with their first ever gig: Ye Olde Hemp and Mead Rally, Runnybottum, Mercia. This gig put them in the limelight, as they had literally slaughtered the crowd with an array of blunt, sharp, and jagged items! Other members of the 'Assassins' remain a mystery, though 'Ivan the Improbable' was later traced to the land of the rising sun: Epping. As I have stated, they were a covert group and subsequently disappeared, only to rejuvenate, *magikly*, 300 years later…"

Their first gig, that Fall, was a big event for the local Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Leon: "We arranged our own first gigs as a benefit for the local CND at a school hall in Walthamstow. As 'leader' of Walthamstow Youth CND (membership about six), I had two burning desires (*ooh er missus*), one was to rid the planet of all nuclear weapons, and the second was to get a gig for Assassins of Hope—well, I succeeded in just one of these noble tasks, and so it was that we played Whittingham Youth Centre in October '81 along with the Eratics, the Epsilons, Terminal Disaster, and the Apostles. Unfortunately the gig was attacked by a group of right-wing thugs, who took objection to a bunch of 'commies' having fun in their manor. Blood was spilt (mostly my brother Mike's, who was hit by a shovel), and another friend got shot with an air rifle between the eyes. Luckily there were no serious injuries, and we made the local paper ('Thugs attack local CND benefit,' or words to that effect). Still, it was a start and we headed onwards valiantly."

Despite starting off as total amateurs, they actually were quite good at focusing on their strong points. Even in their first year of existence the group was pretty solid sounding.

Leon: "None of the six original members—Leon Hope (bass), Mike Raphone (drums), Ivan Oxo (guitar?), Victor Mization, Josie, Chantal (vocals)—had ever been in bands before. Victor left after three gigs and was replaced by Peat Protest, who wrote *Protest* fanzine and had been in Primal Chaos with, among others, Andy Martin (better known for the Apostles)."

With a sound reminiscent of a mixture of early Flux of Pink Indians and the noisier moments of Chumbawamba, it was clear where the group was taking their cues. What's amazing is that while there were moments that definitely were reminiscent of those and other groups, Assassins of Hope was clearly following their own muse. The sort of tribal, driving rhythms and beats are like a rudimentary predecessor to some of the stuff groups like Adam and the Ants or Theater of Hate did early on. But musically and ideologically they were deep in the anarcho scene.

Leon: "It sort of went without saying, I think Victor was least convinced by anarchism and that may have been one reason for him deciding to leave. All the rest of us were totally immersed in the anarcho scene, though we were trying to do something a bit different/original as a band within the anarcho genre."

Generally speaking, these are ideals that have proven deep and stayed with him over the years.

Leon: "I still have the same ideals. I think anarchism is the ultimate future goal for humanity. We should be striving to attain this goal—in fact it's possible but we're going full circle (history may not be linear) and the 'fall of man' was a fall from the utopian anarchist path where we lived in harmony with each other and our environment (cue celestial harps). Whether this is true or not, I reckon a libertarian, socialist society based on cooperation and mutual respect (with room for the mystical/mysterious and spiritual) is a goal worth working towards. It all looks unlikely at the start of the 21st century when you see the power of vested interests who wish to keep us locked into the cycle of production/consumption, acquisition, and its attendant horsemen of war, conquest, which begets terrorism, then a war on terror, and so on for ever and ever, amen.

"However, a lot of people are seeing through the bollocks of everyday existence that they're being fed and the global crisis vis-a-vis the climate change, etc., will lead to an inevitable choice between building a free and cooperative world or an Orwellian dog-eat-dog world. For me it's all or nothing—utopia or bust."

Though the strength of the Pied Bull recording suggests that the group was competent and tight live, through their own admission, their musical limitations could render the band discombobulated on any given night.

Leon: "Exhilarating, chaotic, often drunken, tense, aggressive, a good laugh, all the members of Assassins of Hope were a bit highly strung in some way, so you never knew how the gigs would go. We weren't great musicians (akin to saying Pol Pot wasn't a great humanitarian), and we often drank too much due to nerves and 'cause it tasted nice. We had a small but loyal following of mates who would dance/fall over/jump on

top of each other at each gig—they went under the name of Hackney Hell Crew and the Petherton Piss Flaps (don't ask)."

The combination of being a London band and being deep in the anarcho scene dictated a lot of the shows they would play. Another way to look at it would be that they were able to have regular venues welcoming them because of the same factors.

Leon: "As we're all from London or had moved to London we were in with the in-crowd so to speak. Some of our early gigs were at the Anarchy Centre in Wapping, which had been set up by Crass and others with money from the proceeds of the single Persons Unknown/Bloody Revolution. Basically, we went to anarcho gigs at least once a week, at various squatted churches, community centrers, and pubs, etc."

With that in mind, Assassins of Hope played with most of the major anarcho bands of the day, with one glaring exception.

Leon: "We played with most of the bands around at the time: Conflict, the Apostles, Rubella Ballet, the Mob, Zounds, Subhumans, the Sinyx, Faction, the Eratics, Flux of Pink Indians, Hagar the Womb, Youth in Asia, and loads more. I think the bands we felt a good bond with were the Apostles, Hagar the Womb, the Sinyx, and the Subhumans and Flux were always cool people. Unhappily, we never played with Crass."

In 1982, Assassins of Hope put out their one and only release, a demo tape titled *Slow Motion Suicide*.

Leon: "The title *Slow Motion Suicide,* and also the front cover design of Jesus Christ hanging on the Cross, partly related to how we felt the world was going (happy souls that we were). Songs included "Victims" sung by Josie, a neat little toe-tapper about the horrors of animal abuse, "Conditioned Lives" sung by Chantal, a nifty little clap along about subjugation of women by men, men's/women's slavish following of stereotypical gender roles, "Spastic Disco" sung by Reat, a song about how anyone who is different is shunned and containing the Beach Boys-esque chorus of "I don't want to be part of the spastic disco." "Cartoon War" about…war, really, and how it's a jolly bad idea, and how it's portrayed as harmless fun in works of fiction such as comics: "Cartoon war, bombs go pop pop, you're dead—but you can be released..." said lyrics by Victor, who had a certain sardonic wit. "Dickie Davis"— lyrics and music mostly by Leon: a song about the perils of sniffing glue based on a friend's surreally hellish experience while tripping on glue whilst watching *World of Sport,* which was then presented by the said Dickie Davis, a famously mustachioed/ hair-coiffured sports presenter from the 1970s/1980s."

Recorded raw in their practice space, the group played all the songs as if live. Though low tech in recording, it's still a clear document of their set. Even once the recording was made; there were still some hurdles to getting the tape out.

Leon: "*Slow Motion Suicide* is a weird and wonderful artifact. We recorded it in early '82 in a rehearsal studio, on a tatty old tape recorder. We all got in the rehearsal room, looked at each other to check we were ready...then I pushed 'record' on the cassette recorder situated on the other side of the room and had to sprint back to pick up my bass and start the song. Not very hi-tech then. The sound is/was primitive but it managed to capture an honest picture of what the band was like at the time—it's almost unlistenable, but I still regard it fondly. What we saved in recording costs we splashed out on a cover for the cassette. We sent it to a 'proper' printer but when we picked up the covers we were told "Sorry, we made a small mistake, lads." They had printed *Assassians* of Hope. For good reason they offered to knock twenty quid off the print price and of course being anarchists we said "Okay, thank you very much, how generous," and sold *Slow Motion Suicide* with spelling mistake included for £1."

With the cassette revolution completely seducing the anarcho scene, the tape was a very inexpensive way of getting heard all around the country.

Leon: "We made a cassette because it was the cheapest DIY option and being unemployed, layabout squatters on a diet of bread, peanut butter, and beer, we chose the cheap option."

With the tape now available and being sold and traded throughout the country, the group was connecting with tangents of the anarcho scene outside of London.

Leon: "I suppose we did feel part of the anarcho scene, though also, in a strange way, a little apart from it. Yes, we did quite a lot of corresponding. We wrote to loads of fanzines and answered their questions, and we regularly wrote to people who liked us and sent them our demo and/or our t-shirts."

This was facilitated by Peat's correspondence through his fanzine. Leon also got involved to a lesser degree in the fanzine world.

Leon: "As I said before Peat had done *Protest* fanzine before he joined us, which he continued. I contributed articles to *Scum* issue 5, largely written by Andy Martin. This was controversial as it contained an advert for the British Nazi skinhead band Skrewdriver. Andy (no stranger to controversy) put a note on the zine to say that myself and another contributor, a friend of mine, Larry Peterson, disagreed with the Skrewdriver ad being included. I think you'd have to ask Andy Martin why he included the ad, suffice to say we hated Nazis and Andy did too—but if you know Andy Martin you'll be aware that nothing is simple.

"Later in the mid 1990s I wrote articles, poems, and scripts for comic stories in my mate Paul Trew's iconoclastic and groundbreaking comic *We Kiss Through Gas Masks*. I haven't been in touch with Peat, Josie, or Chantal for a while so I don't know if they've contributed to anything recently."

In general, the tape was a grassroots success.

Leon: "The tape got sold at gigs and by mail order through the thriving fanzine scene that was happening. We sold maybe 200 copies at £1 each, which considering you could buy a pint for a pound showed some commitment from the buying public."

Despite the new connections made through the tape, the band never did tour and rarely played outside of London.

Leon: "We never did a tour; we played gigs in London—the biggest being at the Centro Iberico in West London (the second Anarchy centre). That was with Zounds, Amsterdamned, Conflict, and others. We set up gigs at a punk/skinhead club called Skunx for the Subhumans and ourselves, which were good, except for Nazi skinheads attacking our black and Asian friends outside the venue.

"I have fond memories of playing a gig with Flux of Pink Indians in Putney. Before the gig started, an official flunkey from the police told Flux that due to an organ recital (I think it was) being recorded for the BBC in a church opposite the venue, the gig would have to finish by 9pm. Flux was really decent and allowed all the smaller bands on the bill first (I think it was non-anarcho to call them support bands) and didn't play themselves. They explained the situation to the audience, and then gave them their money back from the entrance fee as they left. I have good memories of Flux—they were a good bunch of people.

We played numerous gigs out of town—ones that stick in the memory are Oldham with the Varukers, where a punk spat at me while I was sound-checking, getting his eye in early, Luton, where skins smashed up the venue long after our entourage left by coach for London. We got the blame and a headline in the local Luton rag ran "London louts lay into Luton" or some such *piffle* (still, any publicity is better than no publicity, as they say).

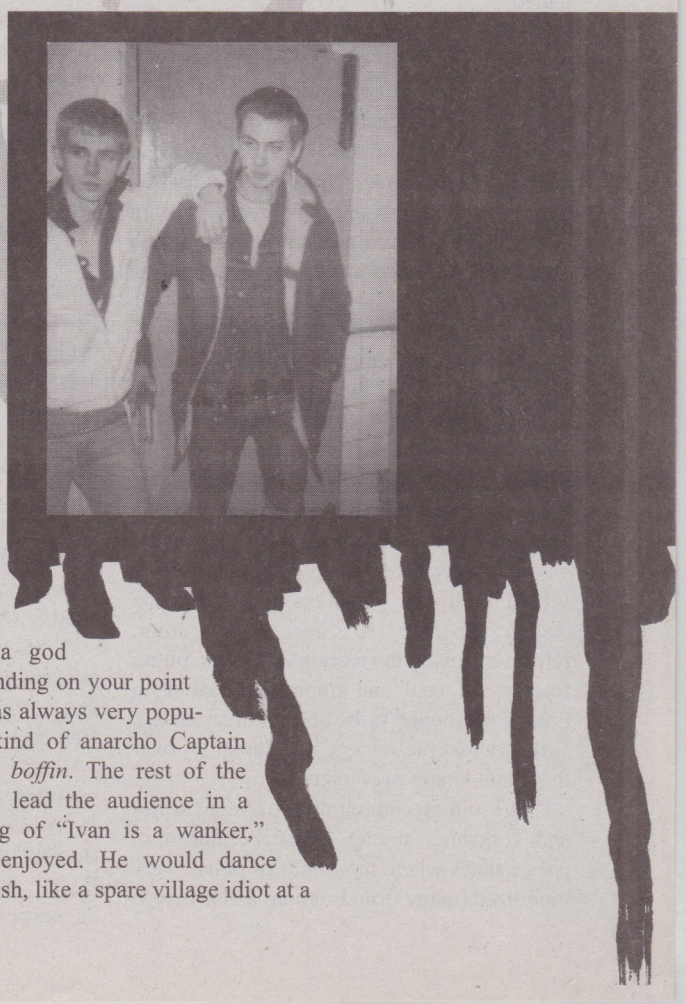
"Once we played a gig in Gravesend (the place lives up to its name), where the whole audience stood outside the venue while we played our set (maybe they were the local Music Appreciation Society?). Anyway we got a bit miffed at this turn of events, not taking kindly to our 'art' being ignored so we went a bit berserk and wrecked all our instruments, my bass split in half quite spectacularly and expensively (I kind of regretted it two minutes later) and there was a general melee of mashed, misshapen musical instruments by the end of our Townsend-like tantrum. The audience rushed in to see what all the *kerfuffle* was and then the fans went wild, let out a roar of appreciation (OK, maybe it was a smattering of polite applause)—whatever—and we were now the toast of Gravesend society. Beer was bought for us, we were patted on the back by burly bikers, and we were informed we were the best band that had played there for *yonks*. They demanded we return to do it all again as soon as we'd saved up enough cash to buy new guitars."

Throughout their two-year existence, there was only one line-up change.

Leon: "The only Assassins of Hope line-up change was when the aforementioned Victor Mization left after three gigs to be replaced by Peat Protest."

But when further line-up changes came up the Assassins of Hope essentially disbanded.

Leon: "Assassins of Hope split because Peat wanted to do different types of music, more influenced by the new positive punk and psychobilly that was going on, e.g. Meteors, Theatre of Hate, Sex Gang Children, and Southern Death Cult. Chantal didn't really want to sing anymore—she always found it a bit of an ordeal getting up in front of a crowd. Ivan was a bit tied up with his job and was never interested in properly playing the guitar—i.e. he put his thumb over the strings and thrashed away without even doing the customary Crass-type bar chord tuning. Ivan's *guitaring* was either experimental Bert Wheedon white noise or a god awful racket depending on your point of view, but he was always very popular on stage—a kind of anarcho Captain Sensible, Herbert, *boffin*. The rest of the band would often lead the audience in a friendly sing-along of "Ivan is a wanker," which he really enjoyed. He would dance around like a dervish, like a spare village idiot at a



local fete, making thumbs up signs to the audience (thankfully neglecting to play the guitar) and donning (occasionally) strange hats or wigs."

With Mike and Leon wanting to continue playing and still essentially part of the anarcho community, they gave their new band a new name that was still related to the old group, calling themselves Assassins.

Leon: "We dropped the 'Hope' because we wanted a fresh name for what was ostensibly a new band. Chantal, Peat, and Ivan had moved on to pastures new, so Mike, myself, and Josie got in a new guitarist, Carl (a punky, reggae, soul boy, diamond geezer and—bloody hell—a musician), who could play real chords and everything. Josie left after a few rehearsals and Gino (loveable Italian, *bequiffed*, heartthrob, crooner) joined."

Assassins in some ways was starting from scratch. It was a full year before the band got back to the point of recording another demo tape. Never officially released, the 1984 recording highlighted the differences between Assassins of Hope and Assassins, musical and not just the change in vocalists.

At the time, the Miner's Strike was in full effect and Assassins were big supporters of the strikers.

Leon: "The Miners' Union (NUM) was the most powerful union in Britain. They had the ability to bring the country to a halt if they wished. They went on strike in the 1970s and had been instrumental in contributing to the downfall of the right-wing Tory Government of Edward Heath. In the early '80s Thatcher decided she'd take on the unions and weaken them irrevocably. She started with the NUM, as they were the major obstacle to her trade union reform/attack on the workers. By stockpiling reserves of coal and importing coal from Poland she hoped to be able to precipitate a strike, defeat the miners, and stamp all over the Trade Union movement.

"The mining communities of South Wales and Yorkshire, among others, became mini police states where thousands of police were mobilized (many from London) and lay siege to mining communities. Checkpoints were set up on roads to prevent miners coordinating picketing, and the police were heavy-handed in breaking up demonstrations, using horses as weapons to knock-down the strikers, truncheoning people to the ground. The miners were strong proud people and were heroic in the defense of their livelihoods and communities.

"Strike funds were set up to support the miners while they were receiving no pay, and the women of the mining communities (many who'd previously been largely pursuing traditional female roles) also organized rallies, collections of funds, organized supplies of food and shelter, etc. Eventually the State won the battle—gradually the miners were forced back to work and almost immediately the coalmines were closed down (eventually they were all to close). The Thatcher Government had the full backing of the right-wing press in demonizing the miners and the government used their victory as a catalyst to attack working class people's trade union rights across the board."

The main way non-Miners could support the strike was financially. It took money to keep it going and to support the workers. For groups like Assassins, this meant a lot of benefit gigs. It also meant their first appearance on vinyl on the *Here We Go* compilation LP with Annie Anxiety and others. Their track "Genocide" is a raw punk song that while maybe unusual sounding compared to other punk bands, was practically accessible compared to some of the more industrial and experimental music of that record.

Leon: "We were fully behind the miners' strike of 1984-85 and our manager Larry Peterson knew people from Sterile Records and got us on the record along with Larry's own band Many Happy Returns. It was a nice combination of raising money for the cause and getting some publicity for the band."

1985 was also the year that Assassins released one of, if not the rarest of the anarcho records, a 12" EP titled *Hell Is for Heroes*.

Leon: "In 1985 as the Assassins we recorded a four-track 12" EP called *Hell Is for Heroes* containing four songs: "Ronnie's Bomb," "From the Gutter," "Red River Run Deep," and "Summer in My Heart." We got our test press of the EP but the record company had unfavorable pre-orders from the distributors as we were not well known and they decided not to go ahead with releasing the record."

The Assassins would release two more demo tapes, *Lust for Life* in 1986 and *Never Been a Killer*. They also appeared on Mortarhate's *We Won't Be Your Fucking Poor* compilation with the track "Red River Run Deep" from the essentially unreleased 12". But by the end of 1987, the band had evolved into the group Swine, becoming something else entirely. That group would continue up until 2001.

Leon: "Mike and myself played together for about 20 years, first in the Assassins and then in Swine. We played our last gig as Swine in 1999 and did a posthumous demo in 2001.

"Peat played with Da Da Dance, Paramedic Squad, and moved back to his native Stevenage. Original singer Victor plays professional piano in clubs and bars. Ivan moved to Japan, married, and has two children. Mike has now moved to Hastings and has two children with his wife Karen and one with his previous partner Chantal, our original singer. I'm not sure what Josie's doing now. Chantal has three children—the oldest, Ozzy, she had with Mike. I live with my partner Jen, together 23 years this January, and I work at a children's nursery."

Even with his wry sense of humor, you can still get a sense of Leon's genuine nostalgia for those times.

Leon: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. There was a great will to change the world around us for the better—in a way, 1981-82 was our summer of love, although I think the appellation our winter of discontent could be more apposite. Crass was definitely the catalyst to thousands of people, their influence can still be seen today in the anti-capitalist/globalization movement, the anti-war movement, etc. They influenced everything from people's diets (vegetarian/vegan) to their housing (squatting/travelers in the '80s) to people's clothing (if you didn't wear black at the Anarchy Centre in '81 you were a social pariah—so well done Rubella Ballet). Naturally I must admit to finding a lot of it a bit 'orrible musically. I liked early Crass up to and including *Penis Envy*, the Sinyx, Subhumans, Poison Girls, Rudimentary Peni, the Apostles, Zounds, the Mob, and some others."

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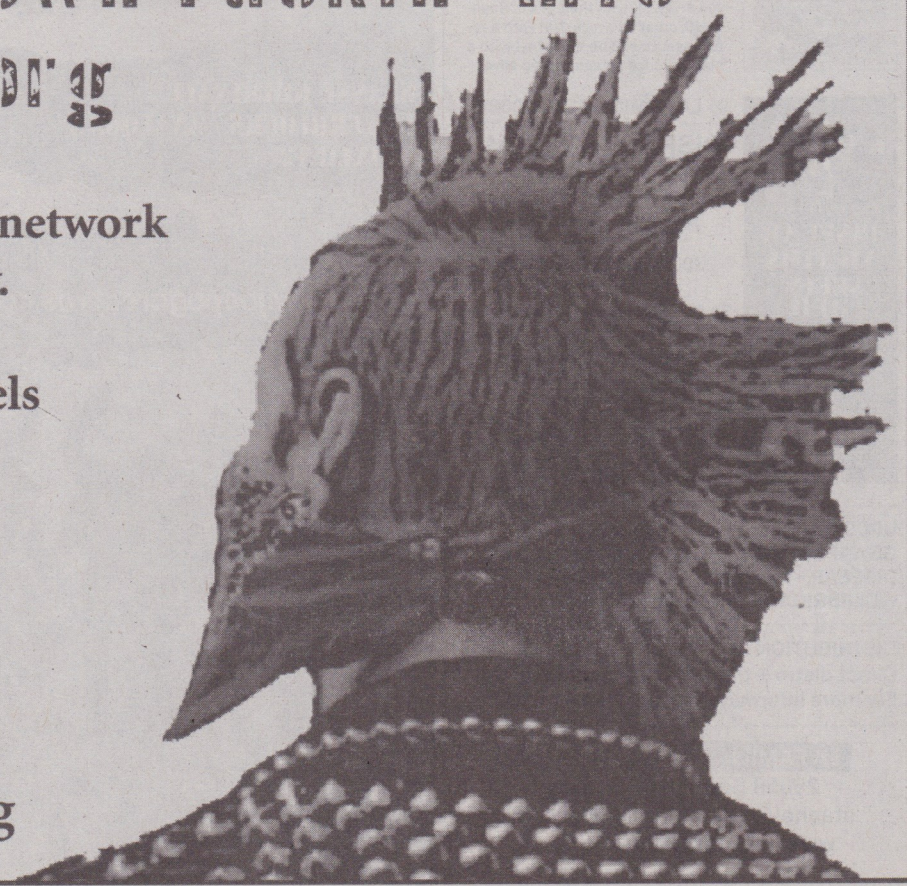

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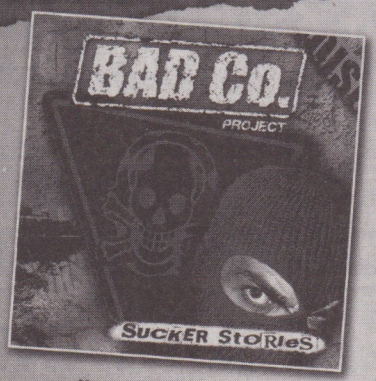

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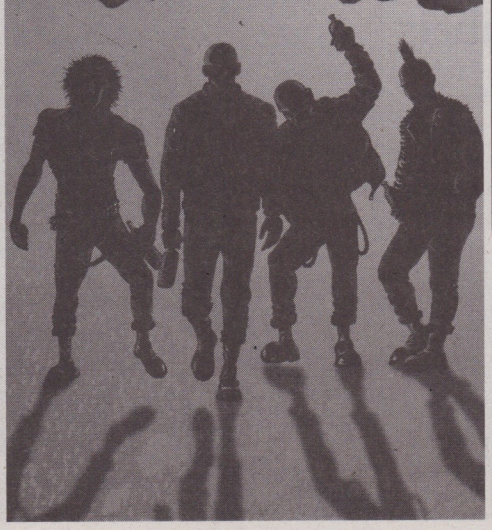

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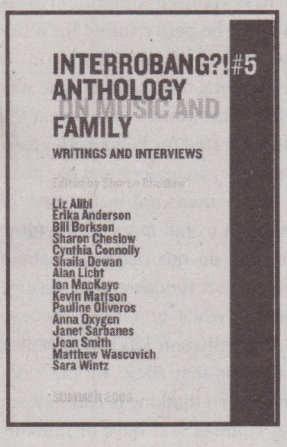


Interrobang?! #5: Anthology on Music and Family
Edited by Sharon Cheslow
70 pages • $13
Decomposition
www.sharoncheslow.com
3288 21st Street, #33
San Francisco, CA 94110

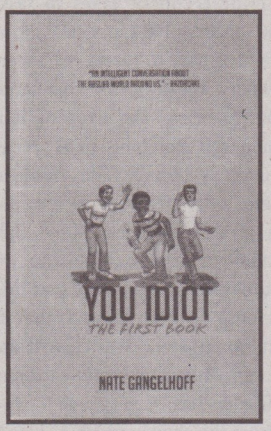
Remember when you were ten and you couldn't keep your filthy hands off your mom's Led Zeppelin LPs because the ripping guitar solos were completely incomprehensible to your infantile brain? Remember hearing snippets of off-key operettas spouting from your father's throat when he thought no one was listening? What about hearing music for the first time coming out of the creepy music box your weirdo grandparents gave you? What is the role of family experiences like these in shaping a person's involvement and interest in music? What does family even mean in a typically youth-dominated subculture like punk, whose adherents often reject their parents and elders in order to create outside communities of peers based on underground music?

Sharon Cheslow, who was an integral part of the early DC hardcore scene and continues to produce art and music through other avenues, has been putting out *Interrobang?!* since 1989, with each issue focusing on different themes. Beginning as a print zine and then moving in the direction of the internet with issue #4, *Interrobang?!* now takes the form of a glossy-covered bound book compiling writings on family, music, and the intersections of community and artistic expression. The contributors represent a wide array of creative backgrounds and use poetry, interviews with family members and friends, personal narratives, and non-fiction to explore these themes.

In this issue of *Interrobang?!*, Cheslow has compiled writings by fourteen musicians and artists, like Pauline Oliveros, Ian MacKaye, Jean Smith, and others, documenting their experiences with music, family, and community. The contributions cover seemingly random topics ranging from the death of John Lennon's mother and feminist psychoanalysis, to the importance of music boxes in shaping musical memory, to the lack of community surrounding the LA folk scene of the 1960s. Some writings describe formative early childhood moments filled with the stolen LPs of disapproving parents, lots of drugs, isolation, and musical awakenings, while others take more abstract routes to the land of performance art and experimental composition.

I really liked reading through this anthology. It seems like almost anyone who picks this up could find ways to relate to the anecdotes inside. The pieces are pretty short, each spanning only a few pages, but the transitions don't feel choppy or forced. Cheslow's goal with this anthology seems to be to get readers thinking not only about their own personal experiences with music in family settings, but also about what constitutes family in a broader sense...and for her punk readers, to consider our experiences with music before our exposure to punk to be just as important and as powerful as our entrances into the underground subculture. This book definitely brought me back to my roots as a preteen sixties psychedelic freak and now I can't stop inquiring about people's pre-punk musical tastes. A fast read, but compelling, nonetheless.

—Diane Anastasio



You Idiot: The First Book
by Nate Gangelhoff
316 pages • $12
Arsenic Books
PO Box 8995
Minneapolis MN 55408
www.pickyourpoison.net

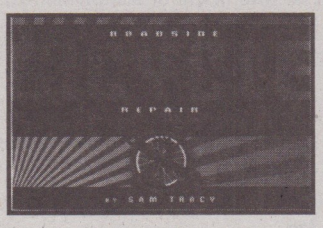
You Idiot author Nate Gangelhoff does what most potheads only dream of...something. It is not enough for him to get high and ponder cultural bygones like religious video games. He must track down the games, play them, join messageboards devoted to them, and then assess their evangelical potential. Same goes for anti-drug video games, which are played while extremely high and/or drunk (to see which wins out—the euphoria of being loaded or the guilt over being loaded). In my opinion, you have a book worth reading once you apply that same seemingly pointless gumption to the fields of cat astrology, pro-wrestler's rap recordings, the accuracy of predictions made in the '70s, the proposed satanic nature of children's toys like My Little Pony and Pokemon (which are challenged against the undisputed satanic nature of Dark Funeral lyrics), and the burgeoning criminal record of Backstreet Boy, Nick Carter.

Self-described as "debating the obvious," *You Idiot: The First Book* (containing five issues of *You Idiot*, plus two issues of *Whiskey Plus)* is on par with zines like *Roessiger, Don't Cut My Balls Off With a Chainsaw, Motherfucker!*, *The Probe*, and *Tight Pants*. Like those, this zine/book is full of the totally irreverent left-field observations that make you laugh out loud on the bus.

Whiskey Plus was Gangelhoff's foray into music-centric zine-making. But as with *You Idiot*, the zine took on a far more editorial voice than a journalistic one. The chapter titles should explain: "Reviews of the Music My Coworker Listens to When I'm Hungover," "Pro-Bush Songs," "Songs Called Fuck You, and Reviews of Records I Couldn't Listen To (Because My Turntable Is Broken)."

Completely, absolutely enjoyable.

—Craigums

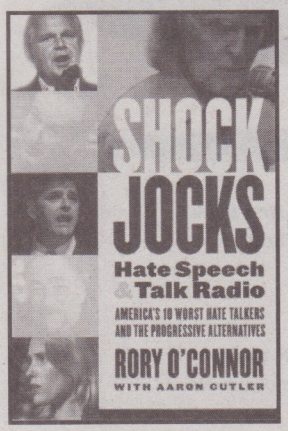


Roadside Bicycle Repair: a Pocket Manifesto
By Sam Tracy
119 pages • $12.00
Speck Press Publishing
4690 Table Mountain Drive, Suite 100
Golden, CO 80403
www.speckpress.com

Everything I learned about bicycles, I learned from my father. Unfortunately, you've probably never met him, so Sam Tracy wrote this book for you. *Roadside Bicycle* is a repair manual written with the novice cyclist in mind, and talks about fixing things on the road with only a few tools rather than in your garage with a full toolbox. It doesn't matter if you're riding a British road bike, track bike, beach cruiser, or even a BMX, *Roadside Bicycle* has everything covered. Included are simple fixes like repairing a flat tire, to trickier things like derailleur adjustments and shoeing brake pads, and the detailed black and white photos make it easy for you to complete these repairs on your own. The ref-

erences section of the book has links to www.fixedgeargallery.com and www.carsrcoffins.com, but no mention of Sheldon Brown at all.

—Tyler Hummer



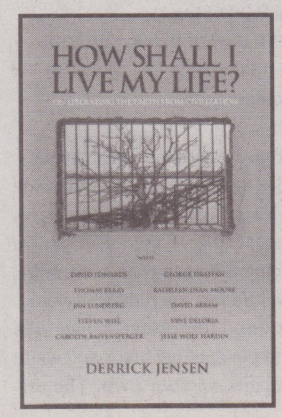
Shock Jocks: Hate Speech And Talk Radio
Rory O'Connor with Aaron Cutler
237 pages • $14.95
AlterNet Books
www.alternet.org/books

Veteran media critic O'Connor takes to task ten of the worst conservative radio talk show hosts in America. It is easy to forget the sheer volume of listeners these jocks command every day across America. The likes of Bill O'Reilly, Rush Limbaugh, Don Imus, et al pretty much have a monopoly on talk radio through Clear Channel, etc. What O'Connor tries to do in his book is give some background and understanding of the phenomenon that is talk radio—its origins and history of how these right wing hosts have become such figureheads of public radio at the expense of more Democratic shows. The main defense of these shows is that it is purely "entertainment" and "if you don't like it, don't listen." It is clear from reading the book that this argument is flimsy at best, with some pretty extreme examples of misogyny, racism, and xenophobia disguised as "free speech."

Throughout the book O'Connor gives quotes from the shows, which in black and white are pretty shocking. It's pretty staggering that this kind of stuff is on breakfast radio! For example, Michael Savage on immigration, "We, the people are being displaced by the people of Mexico. This is an invasion by any other name. Everybody with a brain understands that. Everybody who understands reality understands we are being pushed out of our own country." This quote comes from the chapter titled "The Top Ten Worst Shock Jocks (Minus Imus)," which pinpoints the top ten offenders in great detail; their background, the stations they broadcast for, their political views, etc. complete with extensive quotes. It's a pretty interesting read, even if you are not familiar with many of these characters.

O'Connor goes on to dig pretty deep into where these stations receive funding, and how even after some of these hosts have been fired for their extreme comments, they are neatly picked up by a rival station before the dust has settled. It is obvious from the outset which side of the fence O'Connor is on, and he does little to present an impartial view. This book is clearly lefty fodder. He even goes as far as to devote a chapter to progressive alternatives for the right-wingers. What really stands out from reading this book is how in this country of supposed fairness (he sniggers) shows with a left bent are marginalized by the large media corporations while the right wing shows are pushed to the front. In the politicized world we live in it is easy to forget that even talk radio is manipulated by the powers that be (whether that be government or multi-nationals). This book is well researched and is quite an eye opener for those wanting to learn more about the insidious world of right wing talk radio.

—Tim Brooks



How Shall I Live My Life: On Liberating the Earth from Civilization
Edited by Derek Jensen
304 pages • $20
PM Press
www.secure.pmpress.org

Titling a book *How Shall I Live My Life?* is a bit haughty. How shall I live my life, Derek Jensen? Please, point me to someone who will tell me so I can "liberate the earth from civilization." Fortunately, despite the title, there isn't much talk about "civilization" (a concept so big that it disables) in this book. Instead, we get a group of mostly republished interviews with kooky nature writers, NGO workers, a monk, an animal rights lawyer, a philosophy professor, and, yes, even a street magician. This cast of interviewees articulately tells us that the state of human-environment relations has led us to our doom, or, as Jensen begins his introduction, that, "We are in the midst of an apocalypse."

End times or not, somehow you are still expected to read a book of interviews, and several of them are quite interesting. The animal rights lawyer gives a brief history of non-human animals' position in our legal system. The philosopher briefly recounts a hike where she and a pack of people howled with wolves. The monk tells us how Christian views of nature have changed. Other interviews are less striking, throwing out lists of facts that might be better suited for a different medium than the interview. Sometimes you just need a pie chart.

Most of the interviews in the book root environmental destruction in the way "modern" people and "scientists" view the world. In other words, they repeat the idea that we should not view the earth as if it were created for humans to investigate and manage like demigods. Instead, we should try to understand our position in the world relationally and holistically. While there are many ways of thinking "relationally," most of the interviewees tend to fall more in the ideological camps of deep ecology and primitivism, and do not really talk about other alternatives. To oversimplify a bit, deep ecologists fundamentally assume humans have a spiritual connection with the earth, while primitivists believe that civilization has destroyed this connection and will soon kill us all, unless we learn primitive skills. It's a kind of fundamentalism that works on the binaries of civilization is bad/primitivism is good, or western thinking is bad/eastern thinking is good, which completely homogenizes cultures and ways of thinking and living without complicating the differences within these varying cultures and the history of "civilization."

For example, the magician claims that, "To speak of anything as inanimate is kind of disrespectful. It's insulting to the thing. Why do it? It cuts me off from listening to what that thing might want in the world, to what that object, that presence, might be asking of me." He is referring to a tape recorder. *A tape recorder!* If western thinking allows me to distinguish between the way I treat a tape recorder and the way I treat people, good. Someone who treated every object as if it had an individual spirit cannot function in the world because they would be neurotic to a non-functional degree.

In another interview, Jensen interjects on food that "... we work harder to get it, harder at least than hunter gatherers." This is not a statement that should be taken for granted. Industrial agriculture is really easy for a lot of people; they just go to a grocery store and buy their food. Many farmers have equipment and techniques that enable them to produce more food at a faster rate to sustain a global population of 6.7 billion people, which, for better or worse, hunting and gathering cannot feed. That is not to say industrial agriculture is something we should embrace wholeheartedly. It centralizes food production, mystifies how basic necessities are produced for the majority of the population, changes ecosystems in ways many of us find dissatisfactory, etc.

But, if we are talking about "how we should live our lives," we should try to think of steps to get away from the negative aspects of something over time, instead of just repeating how something is irreparable. Instead of throwing around statistics and platitudes about how we are doomed, why not ask, "How can people in poor neighborhoods get access to fresh, organic produce," or, "How can we decentralize food production to reduce the devastation of transport fuel"? Questions like these are for the most part not addressed in this work (maybe they fall too far on the side of social ecology, Colin Ward's practical anarchism, or other strings of thinkers more interested in social change than condemnation).

To be fair, a couple of the interviews fall outside of these perspectives, breaking apart ways of thinking that may limit our perspectives about environmental problems, even if they do not give practical ethical advice. Most, however, present environmental and social issues from a perspective that usually leaves me feeling like there is nothing left to do, because if you look out your window, you will see that the end is here.

—Zane Grant

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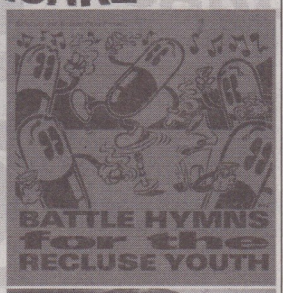

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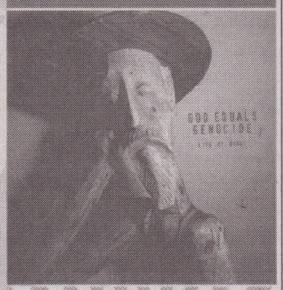

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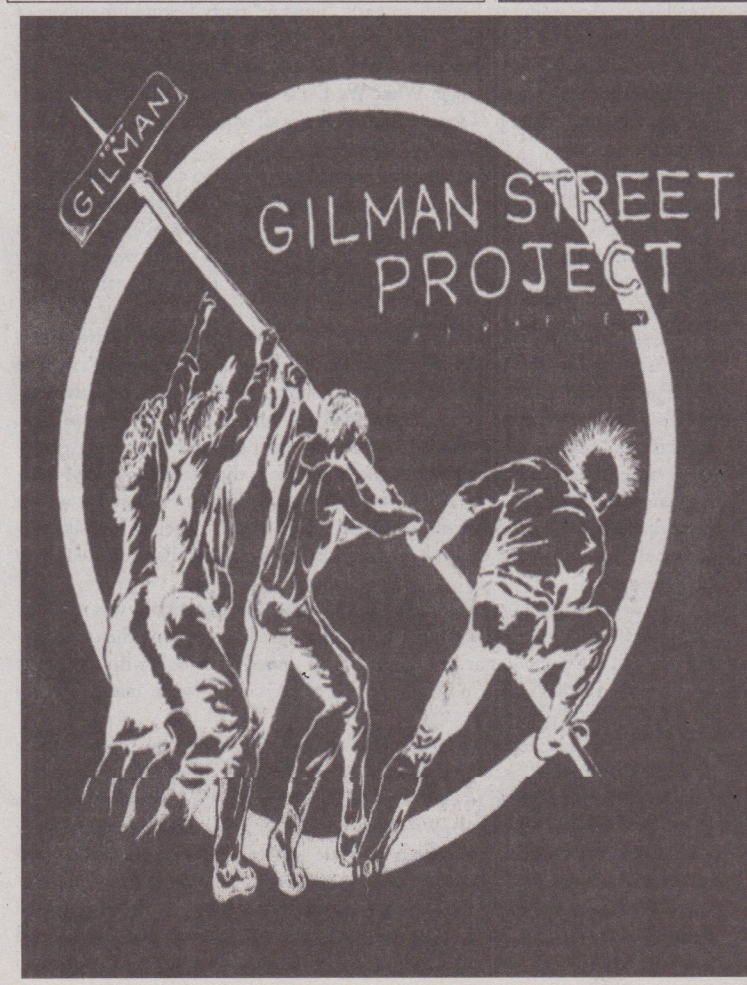
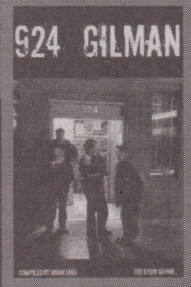


EXCERPT FROM 924 GILMAN BOOK:

"Their (club members') education matters tremendously to me. We're doing something here that should be done in school, but that gets missed. Civics is a joke to most kids. The club is not entertainment as far as I'm concerned. The punk scene involves a sense of community, and values like responsibility for each other and building something. The bottom line criteria is whether these kids adopt responsibility and take care of it. For ten years the punk scene has been weaving the fabric. This club exemplifies the values of doing it yourself and staying non-commercial." —Tim Y., Sept. 1987



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MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

ANOTHER CRASH

Director Rodger Grossman first brainstormed the concept for **What We Do is Secret** after graduating from film school. Over the course of nearly a decade, he met with former band members and people who played important roles in the scene. It's the kind of film that could go wrong so easily, and doing his homework was the only way to reserve its chances of success.

Director Grossman probably realized early on that rock biopics are often painfully embarrassing to watch, and doubly so to make poorly. **Control**, which told the story of Joy Division, set the standard; the narrative would work best if it were honest, dispassionate, and most of all lacking in melodrama. **What We Do is Secret** works best in its near-documentary moments, and fumbles when it pushes the emotional content of the film.

The film tries to effect a sense of credibility by beginning with an interview with Darby Crash (Shane West), which anchors the film in what seems like real-time. His backstage talks, lucid and eccentric, bring the Germs' "philosophy" to the fore—some notion of the band being a circle, which would evolve to another level, or perhaps vanish as it went forward. Darby Crash's philosophy is more valuable for giving an insight into the reasons why he committed himself to making a band. Crash is positively civil as he explains the band's general concept, and we get additional background from friends and teachers. Members of Crash's "circle" could become a member with a cigarette burn—an unconventional kind of tattoo that signified dedication to Crash's neo-Spenglerian ideas.

A few moments aren't quite as convincing. The Germs' infamous interview with Rodney Biggenheimer is certainly textually accurate, but the segment takes pains to justify the Germs' torrent of FCC-unfriendly words by showing the DJ to be nothing more than a stammering art trendy. The film also spends a few embarrassing segments reciting Darby Crash's lyrics and writings. I'm not alone in feeling that his lyrics were often visionary, and unquestionably still shame most rock lyrics; but having various characters read them aloud like free verse divorces them from their emotional context and makes them seem pretentious.

As **What We Do is Secret** rolls into its final act, there's a tendency to lapse into melodrama—almost a death sentence for this kind of film. It would have been more satisfying for the film to end early, and leave Darby Crash's final moments—which most of us know about already—more ambiguous.

Despite these few arguable lapses, the film does considerably more right things than wrong. I usually have one big issue with projects like these. A decade of meticulous research went into the film, including interviews with all the major surviving personages. Given this (and the special feelings many have for the band), it seems almost natural that director Grossman would have made a documentary instead of a feature film. This was done to great effect with **The Filth and the Fury**, Julian Temple's remarkable document on the Sex Pistols, giving you a palpable sense of the excitement and tragedy of the story. **What We Do is Secret** contains music sung by the cast members, and you often have the feeling that you're getting the story, but translated.

Some of the "translations" are fun at the least. I only had the chance to see The Screamers once live, but here they seem even fresher and more exciting, and you understand why Darby Crash found them so utterly arresting. Black Randy (Chris Pontius), Belinda Carlisle, and other members of the L.A. underground make a showing once or twice, and anyone who even remotely knows their stuff will recognize them on the spot. But this kind of film profits from words from the real personalities, and even small glimpses of the actual performances. The film suddenly turns electric when The Bronx (a real band) plays early Black Flag—and with shocking accuracy. This short bit may be the musical highlight of the film.

Part of the problem is that you walk into a film like this with certain expectations. I was mostly impressed with Shane West's Darby Crash; a few of his live performances come acceptably close to the real article. On the other hand, Bijou Phillips' rendering of bassist Lorna Doom seems too sentimental, and Don Bolles (Noah Segan) comes off as a comic foil. No matter how accurate individual scenes may have been, the arc of the plot feels it has to correspond to that of a feature film. The idea of "underground" works contrary to a feature film; there's a certain value in being "secret."

One "inside" joke happens during their debut album's recording sessions: the band and sound engineers are clearly excited by the mixes. Producer Joan Jett lies on a leather couch, fast asleep. It's ironic that this LP embodied the excitement that her own vinyl somehow lacked.

True to the spirit of any project associated with The Germs, the film went through an early production snafu that threatened to bring it to an early, failed conclusion. According to legend, an early "unwrap" party featured members of the film's cast playing Germs songs on their instruments. This morphed into something unexpected and extraordinary; the surviving members of the Germs eventually joined them onstage. **What We Do is Secret** was, then, the catalyzing element for a reunion of sorts. Whether it was all worthwhile is another issue altogether.

What We Do is Secret attempts, to a certain extent, to capture the dynamics of a scene: director Aaron Rose does the same thing, though with very different results. The documentary **Beautiful Losers** could never, ever have been a drama, concentrating on the lives of a group of New York artists who gradually fell into an underground community. Their cumulative influence became international.

It was around 1990. The Alleged Gallery in Manhattan was a meeting place for artists from the twenty-something generation, encompassing a wide range of styles and interests. In the early days, skate-punks, graffiti-artists, and an alternative filmmakers mixed with like-minded aficionados—and the scene soon gathered an energy all its own. The installations became increasingly elaborate—and influential—and it wasn't too long before the members started making names for themselves. "Beautiful Losers" was an installation that seemed for most of them to be a kind of turning point, in which many began to build professional lives, but at the expense of the underground scene that nurtured them to success.

The work of Harmony Korine **(Gummo, Julien Donkey-Boy)** was minimal and punk-like, at least in its general spirit. His remarks are among the more illuminating in the documentary, though his films gained favor only with a group of open-minded cinephiles. And given what I've seen of his work, maybe that's a charitable way of putting it.

Margaret Kilgallen, a Bay Area product, was more central to the group; according to several, her generosity was equal to her free, elegant line art. Although she succumbed to cancer in 2001, a number of her peers felt she was the most talented of them all. Watching her do her art is like watching a story unfold, and there's such assurance and subtle wit to her drawings that it's hard to become a fan.

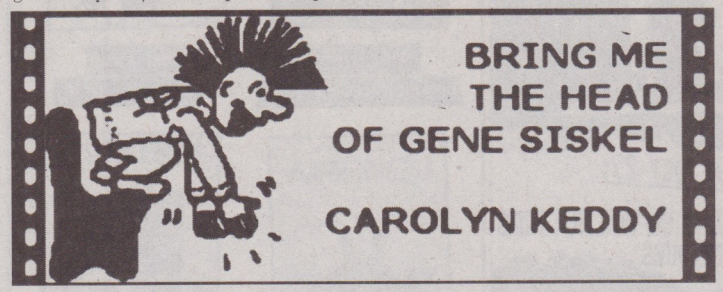
Mike Mills eventually became an art curator, but his path also intersected with The Beastie Boys and Sonic Youth. His graphic design gradually gained wide attention – and his smart, witty comments form a kind of backbone to

Aaron Rose's documentary.

Stephen Powers took the term "graffiti artist" out of the pejorative with his bright, winning landscapes. He makes a good point that his kind of art can make the urban more human; painted signs add warmth and vitality, because you're always reminded of the person who created the art.

Geoff McFetridge turned out to be one of the most commercially successful of the whole group, bringing his winning graphic design to music and business. In fact, the future success of the "beautiful losers" became clear when a group of them was hired to go to Tokyo and provide their design ideas for a variety of products and firms. From this point, each of them realized that their days in the art underground were numbered.

Beautiful Losers emerges as a loving document of a scene that most would otherwise not known about. The story isn't always exactly gripping, but it has genuine quality that helps make up for it.



BEHIND THE NONSENSE

I recently rejoined Netflix. I was a member in 2003 and 2004, but then gave it up and restored my relationship with my neighborhood video store. Netflix is convenient, but I always get the urge to see something right now and I don't usually want to wait a few days for it to arrive. I prefer to go to the video store.

A few years ago some jerk brought about a class action lawsuit against Netflix due to wording in their ads. He didn't get his movies in one day so he was mad. These idiotic lawsuits annoy the shit out of me. I can't actually believe that they get as far as they do. Netflix settles it and I end up with a free month because I was a customer at the time in question. Since I now live in a neighborhood with no video store, I am happy to be a customer again. Although when I was talking to Ken and Denise Sanderson about their Netflix queue we found it weird that we weren't watching movies, we were watching TV shows. I just finished *The Wire* and they were watching *Battlestar Galactica*. I guess it's better than watching any of this summer's big movies.

So instead I indulge in music documentaries. **Kraftwerk and The Electronic Revolution** is part of the recent wave of unauthorized band documentaries. Watching it makes you wonder why there hasn't been an official documentary made on Kraftwerk. The story is fascinating. It starts before Kraftwerk forms and ends after they go into seclusion in the '80s. The film carefully examines German experimental music and the subsequent scene of what would eventually be termed Krautrock. Following with the beginning of Kraftwerk as an experimental sort of hippie band, their interest in making electronic sounding music with traditional instruments and the development of the band's interest in making music with electronics. The band flourishes having their first hit with "Autobahn" in 1974. The end makes the case for the influence of Kraftwerk on ensuing musical movements punk, disco and hip-hop.

Clocking in at three hours with a bunch of extras, **Kraftwerk and The Electronic Revolution** could be considered a definitive look at the band if the main members of the band, Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider, were interviewed. Many periphery characters of the scene are interviewed including percussionist Karl Bartos who played on many of Kraftwerk's more famous records including *Radio-Activity* and *Trans-Europe Express*. Also interviewed is Klaus Röder, momentary Kraftwerk guitarist, Kluster members Dieter Moebius and Hans Joachim Rodelius, Klaus Schulze of Tangerine Dream plus other German electronic musicians. The weak part is the English music writers. While everyone else exudes a real sense of having been there and an understanding what was going on at the time. The English writers seem inauthentic, simply stating facts and dates without giving a feel for what the music is all about.

When punks start co-opting electronic music and synthesizers, the Germans seem flattered by it. In fact, Bartos is quick to point out that Kraftwerk didn't create the synthesizer sound, others were doing it before them. It is only Gary Numan who seems to annoy Bartos. He feels that Numan took the whole image and style of Kraftwerk and turned it into a parody. Even though Kraftwerk was celebrated for their satirical take on patriotic German pop music by singing in German. (www.chromedreams.co.uk)

There is a lot of talk during this election season of deciding which presidential candidate with whom you would want to have a beer. That doesn't usually cross my mind when picking my next president, but if that were what it came down to, I'd have to pick Tesco Vee for president. During our beer drinking I probably wouldn't be able to get in a word edgewise so I know I'd get really drunk.

The Meatmen – The Devil's In The Details Volume 1 is the kind of DVD I'd expect from Tesco Vee. It is three hours long and is a mish-mash of everything that is on the mind of Tesco Vee. There is so much. It is the ultimate short-attention-span video for all the youngsters who can't focus. I particularly like that aside from the title page of the DVD, which features a cartoon man jerking off, the only option available is to start the DVD. There are no extras, no list of scenes and no subtitles. There are chapters so you can skip ahead a few minutes, but if you want to find a certain part, you probably need to watch the whole thing. At least until you memorize the whole thing.

The Meatmen – The Devil's In The Details Volume 1 is really packed with everything for the fan of the Meatmen and Tesco Vee. But even if you aren't interested in him or the band, you will be entertained. Tesco is funny and weird. He is a comedic singer who is obsessed with his penis, but he is equally obsessed with ABBA and his toy collection. He enjoys pissing people off and isn't afraid to say anything, but then his son (yes, he has kids!) mentions that his dad volunteered to be his cub scout leader when he was ten years old. His son kind of says it like he is joking, but you can't help but hope it is true. How twisted that would be.

Of course, there is lots of live footage of the Meatmen. There is an early performance from Lansing Civic Players Hall where it looks like the band is playing to an empty room. Vee says, "This footage stinks. It's so old." Chris Doherty of Gang Green performs with the Meatmen in Florida doing a version of "Alcohol". The band even performs at Bunratty's, one of my favorite defunct Boston clubs. There is an excellent performance from a cable TV show.

The band's live footage is interspersed with various other artifacts of the life of Tesco Vee. We get to see pictures of Tesco as a church-going kid, pictures of his parents, the house where the Meatmen recorded their early stuff, Tesco on a collectors TV show showing off his board games and it goes on and on. Do you remember that Tesco had a MTV show called *Way USA*? It is included here too. As well as a VH1-style profile entitled "Behind The Nonsense". My favorite moment of **The Meatmen – The Devil's In The Details Volume 1** is when Tesco points out that he is often compared to GG Allin and El Duce and then explains that the difference between him and them is that he has a grasp of the English language. Good one, Tesco. (www.mvdvisual.com)

On the other side of the music video spectrum is **Negative Approach – Can't Tell No One**. The DVD collects performances from the reformed Negative Approach starting with Touch and Go's 25th Anniversary in 2006. The band is comprised of two original members, singer John Brannon and drummer Chris Moore. The performances are intense and exciting, particularly Brannon's vocals. He has not changed his style at all and he still looks as intimidating as he did when he had a shaved head. There are six performances as well as some rehearsal footage and some silly backstage stuff. Tesco Vee even makes an appearance.

The only complaint with **Negative Approach – Can't Tell No One** is that the venues seem a bit wrong from a home-viewing standpoint. The band is performing for large audiences on high stages in big theaters, which is appropriate considering their legendary status. The audience is older and more sedate which again is appropriate. The All Tomorrow's Parties show in England has Thurston Moore watching from the side of the stage. I am sure it was probably great to all those who got to see the shows, but for the TV viewer it is a bit tame. I still want to see kids staging diving, going crazy and singing along. I have another Negative Approach DVD, **Fair Warning Vol. 1** (Vol. 2 is available too) released by the same company that has shows from '81 to '84 in Detroit and Hamtramck, Michigan. Those are the shows I enjoy watching from my couch. It's all kids having a fun time and it's really fun to watch. (www.motorcityrocknroll.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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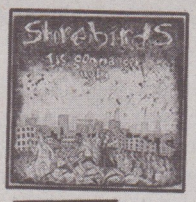

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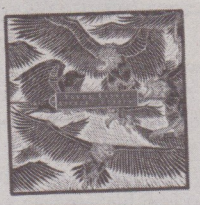

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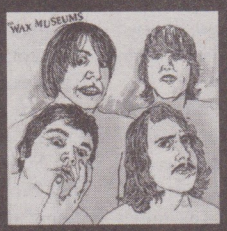

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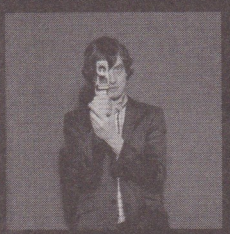

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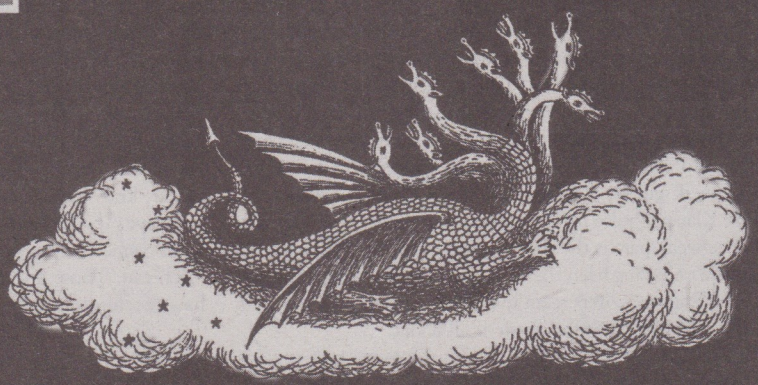

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26 BEERS – "Long Walk, Short Pier" CD

Whoa! From the second this starts, there is fast and loud music in my face! This sounds like the kind of stuff I used to see when I was a kid and would go to *any* show I could make it to, just for the sake of being at a punk show before I got too busy with the "real world" and had to be a bit more discerning about what I spent my time and money on. This is in no way meant to be an insult, just an admission of a choice that I had to make, and I went down a different path. But here is where I compliment this. For someone who doesn't normally listen to this type of music, I like it! Of the few hardcore/punk records I own, this reminds me a little of the KRUM BUMS or A GLOBAL THREAT, and I see one of the guys in the band wearing a BORN/DEAD shirt, which I'm sure is a good indication of what these guys are about. So if you don't know 26 BEERS, but you like your music fast and aggressive with lots of chunky, galloping guitars and screaming vocals, then check this out for sure! (ML)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

ÄÄRITILA – "...Ennen Huomista, Tänä Tuomiopäivänä..." LP

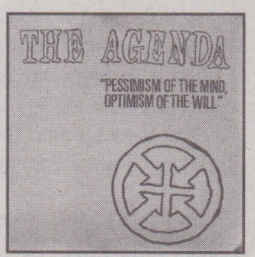
ÄÄRITILA's music is burly, bleak, spiteful, and everything and anything that one wants from a good hardcore band. The riffs and song arrangements are forceful and exciting, and the tunes get stuck in your head after a listen or two even though the music is by no means "catchy." Although ÄÄRITILA doesn't stray very far from the Sweden-via-Finland-via-DISCHARGE blueprint, the songs on *Ennen Huomista, Tänä Tuomiopäivänä* are rife with variety in pace and temperament. ÄÄRITILA is just as likely to trample you with a CRO MAGS-like slow-burner ("Kuolleen Kukan Maa") as they are with a CHAOS UK-infused blaster ("Tuonen Mustaparaati") and they've included several anthemic fist-pumpers that are sure to get anyone's stagnant blood flowin' ("Hakki," "Ristiinnaulitun Lualu," and "Hulluuden Dynastia"). Even a song like "El Loco," which appears to be standard-fare D-beat, features a fingers-possessed, mind-melter of a guitar solo. For the most part ÄÄRITILA sticks with the familiar, which is fine because they are playing a time-tested and proven formula, and the members of the band are masters of their genres (see TOTALITÄR, RIISTETYT, MEANWHILE, etc). On *Ennen Huomista, Tänä Tuomiopäivänä*, ÄÄRITILA has avoided all the pitfalls of thoughtless mimicry and trying contrivery, and in turn they've made one of the best records that I've heard all year. (CI)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

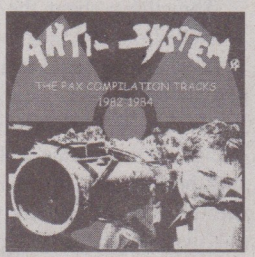
THE AGENDA – "Pessimism of the Mind, Optimism of the Will" EP

Chaotic yet strangely complex hardcore that jumps all over the plac-e. This reminds me a lot of the DEAD KENNEDYS, particularly in the vocal styling, but also in the unusual, surf-inflected guitar lines. The songs seem to change course a lot, which is good if you have a short attention span. The most straightforward of the three on here is "Any Autobiography," pretty much a straight early-'80s hardcore ripper. The title track is more epic: at times it can feel like too many parts that don't really go together have been squashed into one song. This is known as "keeping the audience guessing." Does that last song feature a polka rhythm? Like I said, all over the map, but consistently entertaining. (AM)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

ALL THROUGH A LIFE – "Cities Become Ideals" EP

Desperate, impassioned vocals scythe through a jungle of churning guitars. The bass and drums are synchronized in syncopation. Loud/quiet dynamics propel the music through schizophrenic mood changes. The band is named after a RITES OF SPRING song; what do you think it fucking sounds like? It's emo—this time of the early-'90s backpack variety, as opposed to the '00s MTV variety. To my tender, emo-resistant ears, it sounds a lot like BOB TILTON, who I thought were great. Take that as you will. When I listen to that kind of thing now, it sounds like music made by virgins for virgins. (AM)
(Clue #2, 202-1090 West Pender St, Vancouver, BC V6E 2N7, CANADA, clue2records@gmail.com)





THE ANALOGS / TOWER BLOCKS – split EP

Dear sweet Jesus! Check this out… what a killer-looking piece of vinyl it is—a picture disc 7" (artwork by Sucker from OXYMORON) with a printed insert and numbered stickers on the heavy vinyl bag!! I'm a sucker for the fancier things in life like this. Now, let's see how it sounds… Yep! Sounds as good as it looks (maybe better!). First up is the TOWER BLOCKS from Germany with two rippers: "Voice of the Voiceless" and "No Englishmen at the Bars," which, from what I can tell, is a song about football (soccer) and a bit of a jab at the English for not qualifying for the recent Eurocup with the chorus, "We're on our way to Switzerland… No Englishmen at the bar"! TOWER BLOCKS is exactly what I like—heavy and aggressive, yet there are still heaps of melody that gets stuck in your head. On the flipside is THE ANALOGS, and damn, I didn't think anything would be as good as the TOWER BLOCKS side. I was wrong!! Unfortunately, I can't comment on this too much as THE ANALOGS are from Poland and the vocals are in Polish, so I don't know what they're singing about. Musically, it's great! THE ANALOGS are a little slicker and faster than TOWER BLOCKS, but still mid-tempo, with some really good guitar riffs throughout. Regardless, this record is a *must* for any self-respecting punk or skin that is an Oi! fan! (ML)
(Joe Pogo, www.joepogorecords.com)

ANTI-SYSTEM – "The Pax Compilation Tracks 1982-1984" EP

Something about the matrix number being scratched off of a new record makes me anticipate something better than most of what is being written these days. This is not always the case, easily not in fact, but nevertheless it usually brings out the nostalgia of punk when it was raw and beautiful in me. This boot is done well. Really well, in fact. Maybe the band released this without the label's permission? There are four anarcho punk songs here by the near legendary ANTI-SYSTEM from two separate Pax Records compilations. ANTI-SYSTEM had the elements of both UK82 street-punk bands and their contemporaries like ANTI-SECT and ANTHRAX. All four songs are good, but I like the two from *Bollox to the Gonads, Here's the Testicles* comp LP, they are more driving and remind me of *No Laughing Matter*-era ANTI-SYSTEM, with which I'm more familiar. (WK)
(bootleg, no address)

ARMAGEDOM – "Sem Esperanccas" CD

Mounting crossover-style riffage over a basic and brutally blunt hardcore chassis, lo-fi production values, feedback-laden distortion, and harsh thick vocals spat in Portuguese, Brazil's ARMAGEDOM has gathered a cult following worldwide as one of the defining points of the Brazilian hardcore and extreme noisecore sound since their 1982 beginnings. This new 15-track third LP continues to fly those flags solidly, driven by a basic mix of throttling snare attack, buzzing metallic riffs, and throat-destroying vocals. The production values are much cleaner than the *Ataque Sonoro* comp tracks of 25 years ago, but are still relatively raw compared to some of the slick, high-end hardcore records' production now coming from Brazil. This doesn't detract from the delightfully sloppy, banged-out intensity of the music that rampages relentlessly from track to track. Ace! (KS)
(Absurd, www.absurd.com.br)

AUDIO KOLLAPS – "Panzer" CD

AUDIO KOLLAPS is from Germany and has been around for nearly ten years. The music is a heavy mix of grindcore and thrash. There is something about the rhythm section that reminds me a lot of SLAYER—the drum and bass are unique and relentless with a heavy thrash/death metal influence. The track "Kaputt" is a good example of how it's hard to pigeonhole their sound. The opening song on *Panzer* is a medium-paced headbanging thrash march, then it kicks into speedy metal/thrash bordering on grindcore. "Der letzte Schrei" has a distinct BOLT THROWER influence. Yeah, that's it—BOLT THROWER meets a grindcore version of SLAYER and a little TERRORIZER, but with anti-war and political lyrics. Good stuff. (MH)
(Epistrophy, www.epistrophy.de)

AUKTION / BLACK PANDA – split EP

Furious hardcore with screechy vocals, Sweden's AUKTION combines straightforward yet completely amped D-beat hardcore with rock 'n' roll guitar bridges, which seems to be a current theme of Sweden's newer hardcore bands. I wish, like on the end of the second track here, it was done more seamlessly, and incorporated basic solid rock song structures (a la MOTLEY CRÜE/NEW YORK DOLLS/SEX PISTOLS) as opposed to just throwing noodley guitar solos over the top. This kind of screechy vocals has never been a personal favorite. It lends a wild, crazy, overwhelming edge to everything, but also often dominates the music too much. Spain's BLACK PANDA lays down an intro (?) and two tracks, which similarly "screech and noodle," but have a cool plodding, mid-tempo blunt melody to them. These songs serve up crazy fantasy lyrics about *Mad Max*-style warfare, criminal life, and the pigs. Despite my quibbles, this is a well-matched and solid split. (KS)
(Rust and Machine, c/o Nick Kott, 104 NE 52nd St., Seattle, WA 98105, www.rustandmachine records.cjb.net)

AVSKUM – "Uppror Underifrån" LP

Uppror Underifrån is Sweden's AVSKUM's third LP since they reformed in the early '90s. 18 songs of true Dis-beat, done the way only the Swedes can do it…the right way!! This one is way more to-the-point than the previous *Punkista* LP, which stands on its own as a great album. Although, the overall approach of AVSKUM is very straightforward, there is always a dissonance in the guitar riffs that I think really sets them apart from the pack. Then again, if MEANWHILE and TOTALITÄR were in my pack, I would not want to stray very far. The majority of the lyrics are in Swedish, which is a bit of a change-up when previously they were mostly in English. These songs are a protest against the brutality of state power, capitalism, and the ugliness of war. Fans of the DISCHARGE-by-way-of-ANTI-CIMEX style of hardcore that the Swedes have long since mastered, will not be disappointed by this pummeling barrage to the senses. (SE)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

BANANAS – "New Animals" LP

I'll be honest—next to SHOTWELL, THE BANANAS are my favorite band still playing today. So it would be an understatement to say I have been eagerly anticipating this record for a long time now. It was like Christmas when this came to my PO Box. And that's what this band is like—no matter how bummed, burnt, or hopeless I feel, their songs will take me back to that feeling you have when you first discover punk and how wild and exciting everything is. Even on a bad night when they're too drunk to finish a song, their energy and brilliance will have me dancing and crowdsurfing in the basement/living room/bar/wherever they play. And it's not just me—their shows are like one huge crowd freak-out. So what is *this* record like? Well, the first time I listened to it was like the first time I listened to *Nautical Rock and Roll*. It seemed like half the songs were amazing and half the songs were just OK. But the more I listened to it, the more I liked the "just OK" songs. And now I like those songs even more than ones that stuck out on the first listening. By now, I've listened to this record over 50 times and I'm still thrilled by it. This one ranks right up there with their previous three as a total classic. I really believe that THE BANANAS are the *least* annoying pop punk band around. Even if "pop-punk" is a swear word to you, check out THE BANANAS. This shit is universal and super inspiring. (FS)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, www.recessrecords.com)

BANNER PILOT – "Resignation Day" CD

BANNER PILOT has taken the Minneapolis sound and craftily injected a heavy Gainesville

influence. Super gruff and tough without losing any of those special hooks and melody associated with both scenes. The LEATHERFACE influence is strong, but so are the sounds of DILLINGER FOUR, THE ARRIVALS, and RADON. The songs are short, sweet, and they'll be swimming around your noggin for months. The more I listen, the more I love. Sticks right beside OFF WITH THEIR HEADS as one of the new contenders. (SD)
(Go Kart, PO Box 20, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012, www.gokartrecords.com)

BARSE / D'CORNER BOYS – split CD

A split CD from England's finest—one unfortunately defunct and the other happily plugging away. D'CORNER BOYS play super tight, metallic punk rock, keeping the melody high and the riffs in abundance. Tight and to the point with a nice touch of '82-style swagger. Working class lyrics that don't fall into working class clichés, some down with a wink and nod and others with a swift kick to the *testaloids*. Ten tunes, each a fist-pumping anthem. BARSE throws down 16 singles and rarities tracks. A lot of the tunes come off as lost classics from the heyday of British punk rock, with hints of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, SWELL MAPS, EATER, THE SUBWAY SECT, and THE CIGARETTES, to name a few. The lo-fi production totally adds to the charm and timelessness of BARSE. Personally, I love this CD more than their LPs, as they are soaked in that ol' John Peel warmth that fed my lust of punk back in my spotty, awkward teenage days. A classic and fitting tribute to the late Gash. (SD)
(Hell Tone, PO Box 162, 53101, Lappeenranta, FINLAND, www.lprhardcore.net/htr)

BEEF PEOPLE – "Pavlov's Dog" EP

BEEF PEOPLE was a short-lived band of high school students from Virginia that released an EP, *Music for Men*, in 1985. I know I've listened to that record before and remember not digging it at the time, so I figured this—a 7" with the six unused songs from the EP session plus a demo track—would be an exercise in bottom-of-the-barrel scrape-age featuring some obscure fourth-tier mid-'80s US hardcore band. Well lemme tell ya, I was wrong—this rules! The BEEF PEOPLE were clearly fans of the early Dischord scene (THE FAITH, S.O.A., YOUTH BRIGADE, etc.), though I'm sure that influence is amplified by the great Don Zientara production. Not only does it sound nice and raw, but the songs are good as well and the guitar player throws in some cool leads every now and then to keep things interesting. I even get a heavy vibe from a couple tracks that reminds me of C.O.C. This record comes with the latest issue of *Artcore* fanzine, and includes an exhaustive band history, lyrics, and a ton of photos. Well worth picking up! (CS)
(Artcore, c/o 1 Aberdulais Road, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 2PH, Wales, UK, www.fourletterword.org.uk/artcore)

BEFORE I HANG – "Mississippi" CD

Fuck this Southern rock crap. ANTiSEEN meets NASHVILLE PUSSY—shit metallic garbage played by heavyset dudes with goatee beards in their 30s with songs like "Dixie Pig" and "(Kiss) My Southern Ass." Wow… *Reallly* bad. (TB)
(Zodiac Killer, www.myspace.com/zodiackillerrecords)

BEIRUT SLUMP / TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS – "Shut Up and Bleed" CD

My first memory of Lydia Lunch was my friend screaming at me because I didn't know who she was, and that I should go look at my SONIC YOUTH collection and find her. I figured it out (duh!) and have been in semi-rapt attention ever since. This has both TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS and BEIRUT SLUMP, and I personally prefer the former to the bulk of the latter's tracks. The TEENAGE JESUS songs are total rage that completely doesn't give a fuck about anything, anyone. Lunch's guitar stylings sound like full-on dissonant nails on a chalkboard, sliding hectically back and forth and through chords that don't exist. I love this because it's desperate and terrifying at the same time. It blurts out terror and the horridness of everything in a completely chaotic, antagonistic, and frenzied way. BEIRUT SLUMP is artier and the spooky carnival/noir film instrumentals are a completely different breed of creepy. I like the idea that Bobby Berkowitz, who helms the vocals here, is supposedly just repeating the utterances of New York's homeless, but every time he starts talking all I can think is "shut the fuck up." This is an exhaustive collection with more tracks than 1995's *Everything*, including different versions of TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS songs and all of BEIRUT SLUMP's recordings (I think). I'm down. (MM)
(Atavistic, www.atavistic.com)

BETTY KRACKER – "Bent Outta Shape" CD

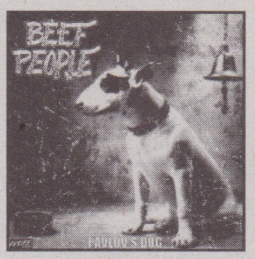
This is like the bar rock version of riot grrrl. It's a lot of poppy hooks, asinine rhyme-y lyrics, and the kind of all-over-the-place vocal melodies that sound like a calculated try at chaos. There's one song on here, "Elephants & Coral," that slows it down and sounds like a bad power-ballad through a SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES filter. Then there's "Alien to Me," a weird progged-up stab at BABES IN TOYLAND with embarrassing lyrics and unfortunate echoes and reverb. And it's all topped off with a slick-sounding JOY DIVISION cover. Blech. (MM)
(self-released, www.bettykracker.com)

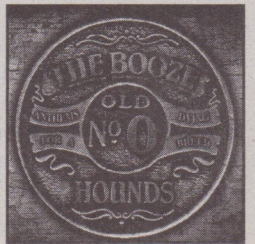
BLACKLIST ROYALS – "Six Strings" EP

Do you like Southern rock? Do you like SOCIAL DISTORTION? If you answered yes to those questions, you'd probably like this slab of wax. While I am a fan of SOCIAL D, I'm not really into the Southern rock thing. The first side of this record is kinda bland for my tastes, and the second is a little better and catchier with some interesting use of a honky-tonk piano. I bet the Warped Tour crowd will love this. This also comes with one of those free download code card things that lots of bands seem to be doing these days. Buy the record for the four songs, then download a couple more for free. (BD)
(Drive On, www.driveonrecords.net)

BLACK PANDA / HOLOCAUST IN YOUR HEAD – split EP

BLACK PANDA is mixture of SKITSYSTEM-type crust and a poorly executed PAINTBOX. Throw in a few guitar leads, some sounding like *Black Album*-era METALLICA wah-pedal-wankery, the others like ANNIHILATION TIME rip-offs, and there you have it. The flip side is an improvement with HOLOCAUST IN YOUR





HEAD busting out a couple of tunes that are INEPSY-fueled motör-punk, but with a bit more of a crust influence in the screamed vocal style. The riffs are catchy, the choruses are memorable, and it keeps my head bobbing along through both songs. "Crust and Roll Forever." You decide. (SE)
(Rust and Machine, c/o Nick Kott, 104 NE 52nd St., Seattle, WA 98105, www.rustandmchinerecords.cjb.net)

BLACK RAINBOW – "Pin Pricks" EP

First thing that comes to mind is a more out-of-control version of THE WIPERS. The melodies get a little too triumphant for me at times, but there's enough desperation to counter it. This is the sound of skateboarding in a parking lot. It's like a story of all aspects of a community—the geography, the history and the secrets—with no predictions of the future of it, just knowing that the future exists and how to move forward and prepare for it. The pace is unrelenting, and I wanna thrash in my bedroom or headbang and push towards the front row and just have that moment of catharsis and feel OK. Did I mention this comes with a *gigantor* booklet of awesome San Francisco histories and things? (MM)
(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.thrillhouserecords.com)

BLOTTO / RINGERS – split EP

Total pop-punk galore. Smiles for everyone and pass the birthday cake around. BLOTTO is from Japan but somehow they took a time machine to 1997 and stole some SHOTWELL licks. Everything about this screams Mission District, so much that if I close my eyes it won't be too hard to imagine a drunken STRAWMAN singer spitting on me between gripes about Communism. Clean guitar tone and cool bass lines. I've been in a pop-punk mood lately and great stuff like this is only going to perpetuate it. RINGERS is also calculating a formula, but they're adding up to STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and THE CLASH and it's just not flying with me. Actually, RINGERS is pretty decent for what they're doing, but I'd rather have the Far East via Capp Street. (VL)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku Kita-ku Kyoto, 603-8117, JAPAN)

BLOWBACK – "Drug War" EP

At first glance, I was expecting this to be some really bad straightedge band; instead it's bad political punk band with goofy overtones that make them sound as serious as WEIRD AL. The level of songwriting is around that of a mid-level high school band. Another shocking revelation about this record is that it was recorded by Don Zientara. That's right, the man that was responsible for recording all the early Dischord records. Don, what happened? Please tell me that this was some unusual form of community service. (PL)
(Spring Break, www.springbreak.com)

THE BOOZE HOUNDS – "Anthems for a Dying Breed" CD

Well…considering my initial reaction was that the band name was lame and that everything about this CD looked kinda cliché, I am happy to say that I was dead wrong—THE BOOZE HOUNDS are really, *really* good! I mean, they're still a little bit of a cliché, but hell, I'll be the first one to say that sometimes it's better to stick with the tried and true. I can't really put my finger on it, but these four guys from LA look a bit older than your average punks, so it stands to reason that their influences are rooted more in'80s and '90s punk rock—back when it was good, in my opinion! The songs are all fast and melodic without being wimpy. For example, they do a great cover of "Such Fun" by THE BLOOD! So my apologies for my jaded initial reaction, guys. Thumbs up from me on this one! (ML)
(Northeast, www.northeastrecords.com)

BRODY'S MILITIA / GHOUL – split EP

BRODY'S MILITIA opens this split up with four tracks of mammoth thrash riffs, blasting drums, and an overall Southern-fried feel that really shines through in the grooving slow intro parts and solos. Overall, the BRODY'S MILITIA side is ripping-fast, most akin to their labelmates like HELLNATION. Y'know, somewhere faster than basic thrash hardcore, but not grind either? It's surprisingly better than I remember BRODY'S MILITIA being. On the flip, Creepsylvania's GHOUL is probably not what most people would think of as "punk." It's more like a cross between classic Swedish death metal (ENTOMBED, DISSECTION, etc.) and classic thrash metal with some moments of a punk spirit. Not necessarily for most readers, but very well executed nonetheless. And gimmicks aside, they are so raucous and tight live. Worth checking into when you need to get that hessian aggression out. (JU)
(Rescued From Life, c/o Clay Newell, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, rescuedfromlife@yahoo.com)

BUSINESS LADY – "Torture Footage" CD

Art-damaged thrash from SoCal… MINUTEMEN meets LIGHTENING BOLT maybe? It's a bit herky-jerky and squeaky for these ears; all off time and full of feedback, with monotone spoken vocals. This shit is borderline unlistenable to me. Fuck, make it *stooooooooop*. (TB)
(Load, www.loadrecords.com)

CEREMONY – "Still Nothing Moves You" LP

Relentless. It's like you know what's coming, yet every time it catches you by surprise. I can't just put this record on—or any CEREMONY release for that matter—because it stirs things up. It's fucking consuming. These guys have perfected a mindfuck style with a sound that has stunning power and transcendence. This second LP ever-so-slightly alters the approach the band has taken in the past. They keep it fresh while not losing sight of what they do the best. The record is more developed than past releases, paying more attention to certain aspects of their sound that they have only hinted at before. They absolutely stay on course with their pummeling anxiety attack frustration rock, but balance that out a bit more than usual with an overall brooding atmosphere, at least on the B-side. The vocal work is un-fucking-believable and the production really compliments the band nicely. I must mention the songwriting has really stepped up as well, adding fucked guitar parts and progressions that you just don't hear on earlier releases. Aces. (RM)
(Bridge Nine, www.bridge9.com)

CEREMONY – "He God Has Favored Our Undertakings/Dogma"

This is a 7" single to coincide with the band's LP release on the B9er. Side "Thunder" isn't much of a departure from most of their previous releases, but sounds a lot more raw and dirty than any of their previous recordings. In fact, this record was done at the famous Bay Area recording studio, Polymorph. "Dogma" is more of a departure from side A, and shows the band's vast influences with a kind of gothic AFI-sounding instrumental. (PL)
(Bridge Nine, www.Bridge9.com)

THE CHEAT – LP

When the needle first hit track one on this record, I was a bit bummed 'cause the song reminded me of a more straightforward HUNCHBACK, and that band totally annoys me. I was warming up my knuckles for another bad review, but then track-two hit and THE CHEAT jumped from that weird, dark, melodic, organ-driven music straight into a solid early DEAD KENNEDYS-style song. I was like, "Fuck yeah, man, here we go." Then the next song was like DAVID BOWIE with surf guitar. And it goes on like this. Each song is pretty vastly different from the last, and it's kind of cool like that, 'cause as the album goes on some broad generalities do pop up. There are a lot of rockabilly influenced rock tracks and surf guitar. The songs are crafted and played really well. The surf guitar works well with what they are doing, and although the songs are super different from one another, they pull it off well and have enough underlying themes to give the album enough consistency to work as a whole. My only complaint comes from when they delve too deep into the realm of rockabilly, but

that's just a personal thing. (FS)
(self-released, fletchiestangs1@hotmail.com)

CHEEKY – "Choke on a Cheeseburger" EP

Six surly songs mark the debut from Brooklyn's CHEEKY. It's catchy pop punk, which is usually not my thing but this seems a little more interesting than most. The lyrics are simple angry songs (a little *cheeky*, even) complaining about something or another, but sung like they mean it and that makes it work. It also helps that the band looks like teenagers. Old folks definitely should not be making music like this. (MU)
(Freedom School, www.freedomschoolrecords.com)

CHESTERFIELD – "Death Grip" CD

A cool ten-song disc from this Oregon trio. CHESTERFIELD has an up-tempo melodic punk sound reminiscent of many bands from the old Fat Wreck Chords roster. Early PROPAGANDHI and FACE TO FACE come to mind. You know, fast yet catchy songs with some personal lyrics and some political lyrics. There's also a nice bit of grit and emotion in the vocals. "Easier" and "Wasting Time" were my favorites on this one, but it was quite good from start to finish. Good stuff here. (RK)
(Mental, www.mentalrecords.net)

CHRONIC SEIZURE – "Ancient Wound" LP

Fuck! These punks from Chicago, Illinois provide a burly, rough-and-tumble kind of punk rock mania! Austin's singing is crazed and desperate like a man possessed by demons, Bryan laces all the hectic song parts together with fast guitar wizardry, and Pat, on bass, and Craig, on drums, give the entire punk blast a firm footing. CHRONIC SEIZURE furiously clambers through "Stark Reality," "Disaffected," "Guilty Sacrifice," "Slow Death in the City," plus six more ragers! This is another hit for No Way and Fashionable Idiots Records! (BR)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN, 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

CIVIL VICTIM / HEADED FOR DISASTER – split EP

CIVIL VICTIM kills it with two rippers, then slows it down for the third tune, just so you can get yer breath. Blown-out but totally discernable tunes that could be lost SCHOLASTIC DETH songs if SCHOLASTIC DETH had been crusty dudes instead of students (can you imagine?). Drum parts are super varied and interesting, which really helps short, fast tunes to not just blend together, and the vox are really strained, like the dude is screaming his fucking innards out through his mouth. The slower tune is still short and cohesive, not the "we write short fast songs but here's a long dirge to show you we are diverse like SIEGE was" kind of song that tends to wrap up hardcore records all too often. Bleak, bleak lyrics, and a guitar tone that could cut glass. Me like. Fellow Euros HEADED FOR DISASTER has big shoes to fill with their three tunes, 'cause I listened to CIVIL VICTIM three times and I loved it. HEADED FOR DISASTER listens to ANNIHILATION TIME a lot. Dueling leads in the breakdown of the very first tune give it away, if the vocal effect left any doubt. A touch too sloppy to pull off the style, but also more punk (less BLUE ÖYSTER CULT) than ANNIHILATION TIME so it totally works. The second tune almost sounds emo in the intro, but that don't last long, and it's a rager, so all emotions are soon forgotten. The last tune loses a bit of the vibe set by the first two—seems like they are going for more of a triumphant power punk thing while playing fast suits them better. But instead of nitpicking, I would be of better service if I just say that this is a sweet ass split featuring two good bands that will both likely get better…if they don't do anything stupid like break up first. (WN)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/headedfordisaster)

COLA FREAKS – "Dødt Batter I/Nej!"

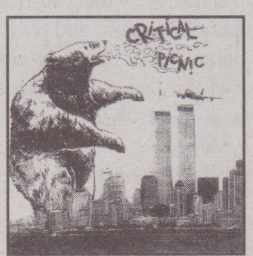
The off-kilter new wave rock 'n' roll punk of COLA FREAKS kind of caught me off guard. I've heard people singing their praises for a while now, but could not muster the interest to check them out. I am totally bummed I didn't get up on how rad they really are sooner! I really can't get enough of this dirty chorused-out ADVERTS-esque guitar tone and classic punk sound that is done well by JAY REATARD, GORILLA ANGREB, MASSHYSTERI, and the like, but COLA FREAKS adds a level of charm and grittiness that can only distinguish it from the pack and appeal to my need for freshness and originality. Totally recommended. (AA)
(Local Cross, 16 1/2 Suffolk St, Cambridge, MA 02139, www.localcross.com)

COLD SWEAT – "Severed Ties" LP

No nonsense. No bullshit. No posing. No take-backs. No holds barred. Take no prisoners. Ain't no fun 'n' games. Tell it as it is. Calling it as I see it. No excuses. Get your shit straight. Stand up and be counted. Get the fuck out my way. I'm sick of talk. Out of my face. I've had enough. Sick of this shit. "This is not a game and it's not for the weak." Hardcore repress. Word. (RR)
(Rock and Rollplay, 4334 3rd Ave NW, Seattle, WA 98107, coldandsweaty@hotmail.com)

COLD SWEAT – "Severed Ties" LP

While everything Randy said in his review has real relevance, I feel I should expound a bit more. It seems to me that until the very end of their existence, no one gave a flying fuck about COLD SWEAT. I was real late to the game, too. Hell, does anyone care now? Or does everyone I know just happen to be part of the cult? Whatever. COLD SWEAT was a band that blazed their own path. *Severed Ties* is definitely everything you expect a tough-as-nails hardcore record to be, but there's no shortage of smashing oddsness and plenty of late-period 'FLAG-ery in the riffs and time signatures. Keep in mind, though, in 2002, when this LP (their first of two) was recorded, every punk kid wasn't yet trying to recreate *My War* or be the next SEX VID. This was a time when being a *weird* hardcore band didn't mean shit. You only played *weird* hardcore 'cause it's what made sense to you, and COLD SWEAT managed to accomplish the weirdness, the Ginn-ness, and the toughness better than anyone could ever hope to in this day and age. Smash the pose, this was the real deal. (JU)
(Rock and Rollplay, 4334 3rd Ave NW, Seattle, WA 98107, coldandsweaty@hotmail.com)



COMMON ENEMY / LxExAxRxNx / SIDETRACKED / WOOF – split CD

A four-way international compilation of each band's most recent vinyl-only releases. Seems to be put together by friends in the good spirit of offering up punk music that is accessible to everyone (even those without turntables). First up is LxExAxRxNx, from Italy, I believe, who operate with the fun-luvin' fastcore stylings that we all know and love. Don't really have to go all the way to Palermo to find this run-of-the-mill stuff, but I guess it came to us. American-made COMMON ENEMY follows with a pretty straightforward barrage of songs—the vocals are shite and the music doesn't really develop much. WOOF is absolutely the high point of this split. They bring some in-your-face toughness and tightness that really stands out. These guys know what they're doing (by-the-numbers hardcore), but the quality shows when sandwiched between their buddies on this release. SIDETRACKED wraps this nugget up with what seems to be a nice blend of the music that came before them on this CD. Not really a must-own, but a nice effort. (RM)
(Horror Business, Dortmunder Str. 93, 44536 Lunen, GERMANY, www.horrorbiz.de)

COP ON FIRE – "Tus Ilusiones Hacen de ti un Iluso" EP

COP ON FIRE is one of my fave D-beat bands going right now. These guys from Barcelona play the style fairly straight up, with maybe a dose or two of thrash. Cool artwork, good lyrics, and even a sense of humor (in D-beat? *Yes!*). How can you go wrong? These guys are touring the US now. Go see them! (NM)
(Barage of Salt, www.barageofsalt.com)

CRITICAL PICNIC – "They Had It Coming" EP

Faux-racist two-bit hardcore from Orange County. I already did this two years ago but better, so do yourself (and Brandon) a favor and buy the WARKRIME record where I talk about "the Chinese at the mall." (BB)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

CRUX / PAZAHORA – split CD

CRUX is from Sydney, Oz and plays some ripping, dark crust with female vocals and some pretty downright depressing lyrics, it must be said. They do mix it up a bit with some metal influences, which work well. PAZAHORA is from Singapore and plays equally, and possibly darker and moodier crust punk with some melody and even peace-punk influences here and there. Killer international crust attack! (NM)
(self-released, PO Box 22, Enmore, NSW 2042, AUSTRALIA)

THE CUPS – "B.Y.O.OB/GYN" CD

Obnoxio-booze-punk here that is a cross between early NOBODYS, LIMECELL, and some crusty hardcore. Loosely played with a lo-fi recording, but not bad. The best tracks for me were "Benny Hinn Sucks" (about the charlatan televangelist) and "FOA" (an anti-racist tune). Some of the shit gets a little retarded with the forced "outrageousness" around some of the songs. Like I said, nothing to write home about, but not bad. Judge for yourself. (RK)
(TopTone, www.listen.to/toptone)

THE DAMN YOUS – "Anal Pledge" EP

Somehow THE DAMN YOUS have managed to channel in the absolute worst sound on this EP. The bass is way too trebly and snappy, while the guitar wades around in a sea of its own sludge, and the drums have all the resonance of a tin can filled with sewage. It's kind of hard to make out any subtleties in a recording like this, but judging from songs titles such as "Anal Pledge" and "Cockfight," I'd say THE DAMN YOUS are strictly on-the-surface, what-you-see-is-what-you-get type of guys. Well, I hope they're at least having fun, because this EP is teeming with turds. (CI)
(Burnt Sienna, omaryamigos@yahoo.com)

DAN PADILLA / DUDE JAMS / GORDON GANO'S ARMY / SHANG-A-LANG – split EP

A comp with no name… Four bands play mid-tempo to fast rough melodic punk. DUDE JAMS is good. They come from LA and sound like TOYS THAT KILL, or maybe a sober FYP. SHANG-A-LANG have a scrappy, sped-up No Idea kind of sound, a little like TILTWHEEL. GORDON GANO'S ARMY comes from the UK and throws some English accents into the mix while simultaneously playing a simple, but very nice track that, if I had to make a comparison, I would say sounded like a rough, British WESTON. DAN PADILLA, from San Diego, donates a tough, gravelly slow jam, not unlike NOTHINGTON or a less country UNITAS. All of this is very good. (AD)
(Fast Crowd, 2721, Wightman St, San Diego, CA 92104)

DAN PADILLA / PRETTY BOY THORSON AND THE FALLING ANGELS – split EP

Ah, I always love a good friendship split 7". This is totally one of those kinds of records. Y'know, the kind where both bands include a cover song of each other's songs. This record turned out awesome. I really liked both of these bands before hearing this, and this record just reinforced how I feel. DAN PADILLA does that beer-soaked, trashy pop punk in the vein of TILTWHEEL, SCREECHING WEASEL, and even JAWBREAKER sometimes (like on this record), while PRETTY BOY THORSON AND THE FALLING ANGELS does the whole fast-tempo country/folk punk thing. All their songs are about how they're pathetic drunks and their life sucks. It's good though. They are among only a small handful of bands that can actually pull off this type of music without completely irritating me. And that takes talent. Fuck yeah! This record rules! (FS)
(Fast Crowd, 2721 Wightman St., San Diego, CA 92104)

DAVILA 666 – CD

This record is fantastic! I haven't been able to stop listening to it since I got my hands on it. I heard good things about the band, but sometimes I take those recommendations with the necessary grain of salt, remembering the other bands that have made that list. So, I never expected to like DAVILA 666 this much. Should I say it again? I love Davila 666. This is an incredible record. Raucous garage rock with the daring and confidence to include not only the '60s and '70s influences, but the '80s and '90s as well. If you listen closely, you can find it all in there: garage, punk, psych, soul, new wave, college rock, indie, shoegaze, any rock sub-genre you can think of, all mixed up and shot out into one mind-blowing package. All the songs are so catchy and fun. This six-piece band has so much soul, and they aren't afraid to use it. You just want to dance and sing along even on the first listen. Davila 666 is from Puerto Rico and all the songs are sung in Spanish, but my lack of a full Spanish vocabulary doesn't stop me from singing. It won't stop you either. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

DAY CREEPER / NIGHT OF PLEASURE – split EP

If Columbus is the new ground zero for off-kilter punkishness, these two bands only strengthen the case. DAY CREEPER, heard for the first time here, sounds totally great to these ears. A definite DIY jumping off point that can move from total pop to that hissy organ "it" sound with ease. Both tunes here are winners. NIGHT OF PLEASURE, old news to Columbus Discount devotees, leans much further toward noise and blown-to-hell post-punk, yet still finds a way to end on a pop note. If you're at all curious about what bands like PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT, PINK REASON, or countless others are up to, this is a cheap and readily available way to find out what the fuss is about. Nice split! (MC)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/daycreeper)

DEAD GHOSTS – "Holy Ghost/I Don't Understand"

The second single from Vancouver's DEAD GHOSTS. Fuzzy garage-pop with lackadaisical

vocals. The distortion is flowing, but beneath it there are some pretty songs. It is jangly pop and messy noise rolled up and topped with flat vocals that the singer half-jokingly struggles to get out. DEAD GHOSTS could easily be the male counterpart to the VIVIAN GIRLS. Nice stuff. (CK)
(Boom Chick, boomchickrecords.com)

DEAD ON A FRIDAY – "Hope It Was Worth It" CD

Hmmm… I don't know what to say about this without being snarky. I know it gets harder and harder for people to be original with punk these days. Most types of punk have been around for a long time now, and are done very well by some, not so well by others. This falls into the latter category. This sounds like Epitaph Records a la BAD RELIGION and any other band that falls under that umbrella. I swear I don't try to keep using the same references in these reviews, but sometimes you just can't help it. This doesn't do anything for me, so I'll end it here. (BD)
(Stabsco, www.deadonafriday.com)

DEADLY SINS – "Selling Our Weaknesses" CD

Hmm…sometimes it takes me a few listens for a band to grow on me, so maybe that is what is needed for DEADLY SINS. However, assuming that is not the case, I gotta go on first impressions here. As much as *Selling Our Weaknesses* is a totally slick and well-produced package, and DEADLY SINS is obviously incredibly talented, it just bores me. It sounds like a girl-fronted rock band from the '80s that might have had a radio hit and was then forgotten about. Before you rise to their defense, believe me, I have a lot of guilty-pleasure bands that could fall into that category, but DEADLY SINS isn't one of them. (ML)
(Durty Mick, www.durtymickrecords.com)

DEFEKTORS – "Secret Trials/Doomsday Girl"

"Secret Trials" conjures up the K-Town re-visionaries of classic US punk, yet with an aggressive pop lean that builds only to explode midway through. Itchy, anthemic and over far too soon. There's even a vague early UK punk feel here, pub-y at times, that completely gets me on board from the outset. It's present even more on the flip, which is actual classic textbook punk made applicable to the dance floor. A really great debut 45, please seek out! (MC)
(Nominal, 726 Richards St., Vancouver, BC V6B 3A4 CANADA, www.recordsnominal.com)

DERROTA – "Asko Infinito" LP

In many ways, this LP is a breath of fresh air. Judging from the mammoth lyric book that contains translations from Spanish into four different languages, DERROTA has put a lot of consideration into their words, and although the English translations are slightly awkward, the songs appear to be thoughtful and beyond your standard political rants. The vocalist has a convincing animated, furiously shouted/screamed style. A lot of the guitar work is random, playful, and scratchy, but the guitarist also knows when to bash out into a full-on hardcore frenzy. In general, DERROTA blends different elements of '80s, '90s, and modern hardcore and punk styles, but doesn't appear to be dedicated to any particular era. Some of their musical ideas don't work, like the stoner jam-out at the end of the LP—shit nearly put me to sleep—but the random and neatly-littered, jittery guitar parts make DERROTA's songs memorable, distinct, and interesting. This LP is not for everybody—the modern punk who favors an unbalanced mixture of noise and apathy needn't bother, but those who still enjoy listening to sincere hardcore punk will find a lot to like here. (CI)
(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Caracaixent, Valencia, SPAIN, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

DISASTER STRIKES – "The Interrogation Sessions" EP

Four well-produced, blatantly political punk songs that have not one ounce of originality or character. The music is boring, mid-tempo, repetitive, and uninteresting, while the vocals (which initially is what I thought would doom this record) are "large man talking loud" style, for the most part, with terrible gang and/or other surprises throughout. DISASTER STRIKES does champion a lot of noble causes and gives an impressive list of contact info in their insert, which will hopefully stimulate your average non-politico. (RM)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 409092, San Francisco, CA 94040, www.alternativetentacles.com)

DISCO VOLANTE – "We Are Forever" CD

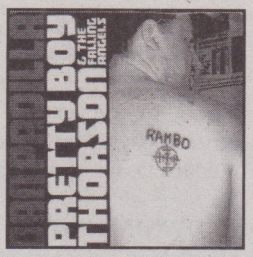
This band rocks! From Sweden since 2001 or so, these gals and a guy do it in a metal punk way. Kinda TURBONEGRO and kinda early DISTILLERS with classic hardcore punk overtones in the mix too. I also respect their fondness for darkness. "It's Your Funeral," "Beat The Blood Out," and "Teeth In Acid"—good times! It's too bad I'll probably never get to see them live. STOOGES fans on crank will like this. (RL)
(Not Enough, www.notenough.hardcorepunk.se)

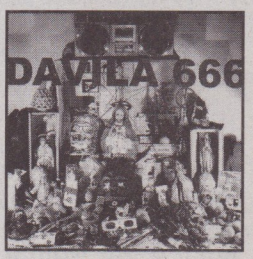
DISGUST / MEINHOF – split CD

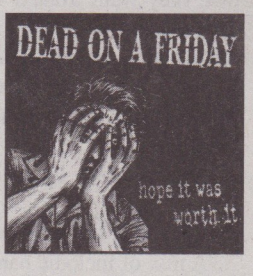
MEINHOF is from London and plays straightforward, thick crust a la STATE OF FEAR and all things *Profane Existence* related, but with a female vocalist. It's OK—a little too straightforward for my tastes. I heard and still remember too many bands like this from the '90s. DISGUST, though…watch out. Similar style, but done with much more personality. The drummer for this band is great and adds loads of fills that makes this stand out. This CD was released for the bands' Lust for Destruction tour of Japan, which is happening in November 2008. Pretty good, mostly for the latter tracks and recommended for the genre enthusiasts. (VL)
(MCR Company, www.dance.ne.jp/~MCR)

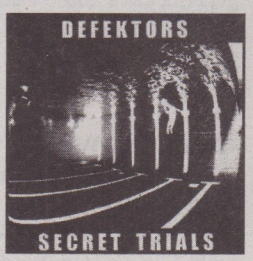
DOA – "Northern Avenger" CD

A few weeks ago I was listening to DOA's first album *Something Better Change*, and was thinking how great it still sounds after all these years. Then I get this new disc to review, which celebrates Keithley and company's 30th anniversary as a band! I've gotta say that this is one of the best DOA albums to come out in many years. Great sound due to a solid production by Bob Rock and Jamey Koch—fat guitars, big shout choruses with classic DOA hooks. "Golden State," "Police Brutality," "How Long Till the Day," "Still a Punk"—hell, there's tons of great songs on here (even a punked-up cover of CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL's "Who Will Stop the Rain"). I'm very









happy to report that these highly influential Canucks have done themselves proud with *Northern Avenger*. Congratulations Joey. Here's hoping we get another 30 years out of you geezers! Highly recommended. (RK)
(Sudden Death, www.suddendeath.com)

DROWNING WITH OUR ANCHORS – "Breathing Lessons" EP

What we have here is a 1994 time-machine 7". It's the sound of high-water pants, gas station jackets, HOOVER 7"s and letters to *HeartattaCk*. DROWNING WITH OUR ANCHORS prominently features the whiny fervent guy and the gruffer-voiced one, groovy dub-via-DC basslines, and those eternal quiet-loud guitar dynamics. It seems this is a band influenced by those manila-enveloped, dried-leaf emo bands that got into SLINT in '93—POLICY OF THREE, ORDINATION OF AARON, LINCOLN, and so forth! (LG)
(Commodity Fetish, 2013 Vanderbilt Ln #C, Redondo Beach, CA 90278, www.myspace.com/commodityfetish)

DRY RIB – "Whose Last Trickle" CD

More DIY obscurities from Hyped to Death, this time late-'70s art-punkers DRY RIB. Sharp and angular with wandering guitar leads and nonsense lyrics. At times this is like GANG OF FOUR, CRASS, ASTRONAUTS, or some of the artsier peace punkers at their most mercurial if they were fronted by Jon Cooper Clarke. Historically interesting, sonically less so—just sounds like a load of random cobblers to me. Some of you DIY fanatics might be able to stomach this, but it's just too…experimental for me. (TB)
(Hyped to Death, www.hyped2death.com)

DUN BIN HAD – "Booze Train" CD

A mix of melodic hardcore and some bits of ska-punk. OK at times and not at others. A bit generic, circa 1997. I actually like the ska bits best as the speedy stuff seems too thrashy for my ears. (RL)
(Vinehell, www.vinehell.com)

ELEPHANT WALK – "Swim the Sea" EP

Short and sweet garage pop jams. Very catchy and scrappy, like NO BUNNY or even a loose KING KHAN. It's fun, it's funny, and it looks like it's from Wisconsin. (AD)
(Dusty Medical, PO Box 1981, Milwaukee, WI 53201, www.dustymedical.com)

END OF ALL – "The Art of Decadence" LP

It's hard when a genre gets played out. What do you do if you are a Swede-core band along the lines of ENTOMBED, DISFEAR, and so on? There are so many bands trying to play your genre that it's nearly impossible to stand out. What END OF ALL did is make a record so fucking good that it doesn't matter how many other bands are playing the same style, it simply destroys everything in its path. Yes, you have heard all of these riffs in different forms before, and yes, those meandering floating guitar melodies might sound strangely familiar, but this shit is *good*, and fans of the aforementioned, or VICTIMS, WOLFBRIGADE, AMBULANCE, KONTROVERS, GENOCIDE SS, PERSONKRETS 3:1, or any number of stellar Scandi-punk standouts need to take note. This 12" kills their first LP, and is a perfect example of why more bands should *not* play this style of "riding yer motorbike through the tundra with your hair flowing over your shoulders like a Viking" hardcore—because your band can't do it as good as those other bands, so please don't try. (WN)
(Halo of Flies, 430 E Lloyd St, Milwaukee, WI 53212, www.haloofflies rcds@hotmail.com)

ERISTETYT – "(Sitä On Systeemi) Yks Vitun Sekasotku" LP

You'll find 28 tracks here, comprising ERISTETYT's output from '89-'90. The sound can vary somewhat in timbre, but tracks like the sharp, buzzy "Sekasotku" are most indicative of the band at their best. Their typical sound comes closest to APPENDIX, and is instantly recognizable as Finnish hardcore from the first riff. Despite this, "Euroopa" may be my favorite in retrospect—a simple, mid-speed riff that's catchy and closer to punk than all-out hardcore. The style should be very familiar to you by now, but it's done well. A welcome aggregation of tracks. (SS)
(Roku, PL148, 96101 Rovaniemi, FINLAND, www.rokurecords.com)

ERKKI JA TUOMIO – "27.4" CD

Five blistering tracks from this new Tampere band in the classic melodic hardcore style of '80s Finland (a la KAAOS, RIISTEYT), topped with a cover (in Finnish, as are all the lyrics) of THE EXPLOITED's "Fuck the USA." A classic rendition of this style with the howling vocals, charging guitar riffs, hammering drums, and buried yet plucky bass lines all intact—with only slight tweaks and cleanness in the recording to hint that it's not 1984, you're not drunk on Kilju, and APPENDIX is not about to play next. Fun! (KS)
(self-released, www.paskavatkaamo.com/erkki_ja_tuomio.html)

FAG STATIC – "Ficcanaso" LP

These songs walk a fine line between all right screamo-type post-hardcore (Clean Plate Records type stuff) and bad generic screamo in a manner that the line kinda becomes blurry and insignificant. They throw in some appealing leads. The more I listen, the more I kind of enjoy the music, but really dislike the tenor of the screaming—it's repetitive and pretty whack—especially for an album this long. The music is good when it's progged out and when it's jamming heavier, but the vocals are unimpressive. I can't listen to this as a whole without any enjoyment free from obligation. Ya know, I probably wouldn't listen to it or put forth the effort necessary to enjoy it unless I had to review it. From what I understand, these tunes are named after Italian horror film jamz, which is indicative of the degree to which their pretension doth be real…and inadvertently funny. (P$)
(Room 10 Collective, myspace.com/room10collective)

FAMINES – "Black Sea" 2xEP

A double 7" in this case doesn't seem right. Why not a 10" or 12" EP? Sounds like a guitar and drum duo, and FAMINES reminds me of some of the bass and drum duos I've heard recently like DOUBLE DAGGER. This has a garage-indie-rock vibe with a little post-punkness. There's a lot of repetition within the songs—verses and riffage repeated. This record fails to elicit anything from me. In their press release it says they "sweat like dogs in cars." That statement's pretty accurate 'cause dogs don't sweat much, and these dudes don't have the metaphorical sweat to lube the rock. (P$)
(self-released, www.thefamines.ca)

THE FEELERS – "Nothing Always" EP

I love THE FEELERS. They seem like they're about to fall apart any moment. Fitting snugly amongst your HoZac, REATARD and Douchemaster records, most of you heads know if you are on board or not. Way less no-fi than some of their gear, this is tweaked-out garage pop with an art school bent at its best. Their strongest yet for sure. Go see 'em live for the real deal. (TB)
(Bachelor, 5421 Adnet 186, AUSTRIA, www.bachelorrecords.com)

FLAMINGO 50 – "What If Will Never Do" CD

This is basically melodic hardcore with a gigantic injection of pop punk. Think if DAG NASTY and NOFX became one and then suddenly became a band from Liverpool. The disc is kind of long, but I think anything is long once it gets past 15 tracks (this is 23), but I guess it's expected since it's a compilation of EPs and things. FLAMINGO 50 mega speeds it up here and there and it's exciting and thrashy. For the most part though, it follows the above combo. (MM)
(Fixing a Hole, www.myspace.com/best-punkrockinengland)

FLASH GORDON / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

Both bands hail from Nagoya, Japan, and

have played together for years but are only now releasing a record together. Incidentally, it is also FLASH GORDON's last release. The UNHOLY GRAVE side *really* stands out to me. I'd since written them off a while ago, but the production on this is much more raw and I love it. Recorded in their practice space, the recording is very overdriven and heavy—a great departure from their usual higher production. The vocals are recorded really low and with thick distortion on everything. This record has much more personality than their other records…*A-fucking-plus*! FLASH GORDON plays fast hardcore a la Y2K thrash, does it really well, and will be missed. Both bands cover a song by the other. Numbered; first press is 500. (VL)
(Devour, recordlabeldevour@yahoo.co.jp)

FOR THE WORSE / OUT COLD – split EP

Fucking A!! Two of the Boston area's most dangerous hardcore units have teamed up to produce a ludicrous thrash-fest. OUT COLD, veteran hardcore fucks from Dracut, MA, have contributed an A-side from hell for this split. OUT COLD crushes you with "I'm a Cutter," "Gimme Skelter," and "Colder." This is *as* good as hardcore gets in the United States of America! OUT COLD has never gotten the respect that they are due in the hardcore scene; now is the time to sing their praises. Long live OUT COLD. Flip this baby over, and you get one of the premier thug-core Boston bands. Just to clarify shit for you dribble-dick punks, "thug" hardcore is a compliment! You guys that wanna listen to garage rock can go fuck yourselves—give me BLOOD FOR BLOOD and FOR THE WORSE! FOR THE WORSE crashes through "Road Warriors," "Smoke & Mirrors," "No Rhyme, No Reason," "Attention Span," and "Dropping Like Flies." This is Boston hardcore in its most exalted state! Fuck yes! To order your new OUT COLD/FOR THE WORSE EP, contact Kangaroo Records now! (BR)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, HOLLAND, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS – "Or Else" EP

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS has a total SoCal punk sound very much akin to TSOL. There is a song about Hieronymus Bosch and the cover art depicts blotter paper. It reminds me of that scene in *Over the Edge* when the kid takes acid, but thinks he is taking speed, and then the teacher shows a slide of Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* and he freaks out. This band, like the movie, is great. I'm told that their demo was more MIDDLE CLASS sounding, and they've got the old LA sound down, but they come off fresh and not a complete rehash bore. I want a whole album's worth of songs, because these three are not enough. Highly recommended! (RR)
(Smokin' Barrel, smokinbarrelrecords@gmail.com)

FUNERAL SHOCK – "Paint Thinner" EP

I'm sure every review for this EP will mention the utterly obvious Greg Ginn veneration that's going on with the opening instrumental track here, but it fucking rips, so who cares! This track leads into the inspirational and cheerful "Let's Fight," and that's where the raw BAD POSTURE meets CAPITAL PUNISHMENT hardcore influence takes off and makes you want to start cutting yourself and pushing people on the sidewalk. The fun ends way too quickly, so you have to pause your violent thoughts to flip the thing over. The first track on side two is my favorite, as it sounds like 7 SECONDS' "Skins, Brains, Guts," but with tougher vocals. The last song is a slower soundtrack for slipping into darkness. No lyric sheet is a bummer, but we can be assured that the words ain't pretty. Mid-'80s fuckup-core punk can only be done right by current fucked-up punks, and FUNERAL SHOCK is that band! Fuck all that posi-core bullshit, this is what hardcore is all about—the ugly and proud. (BG)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

GEHENNA – "Land of Sodom" EP

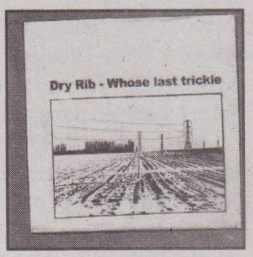
Finally some new output from this ever-evolving evil force. GEHENNA was (most likely still is) a dangerous band, and often very intimidating live, and though I personally only saw them play once in like 1996 or 1997, the stories are endless. On first listen, the three tracks on the A-side, "Tormentor," "Possessed," and "Caveman," were much faster than I remember the previous records being, and after a revisit to *Birth of Vengeance,* that assessment still stands. A quick beating of thrashing hardcore with nods to proto-black metal and weird interesting effects—kinda like a more raw and dirty GISM-via-Cleveland feel, though essentially sounding nothing like either. The B-side is one plodding and doom-y side-long track with backmasked vocals. Really though, this band is kind of undefinable—GEHENNA is more a hateful state of mind than anything. Good to see them back. For those that can get down with the more metallic side of fast hardcore, you need this record. *If* you can handle it. (JU)
(Hit the Deck, Kensington PO Box 61222, Calgary, Alberta T2N 4S6 CANADA, www.hitthedeckrecords.com)

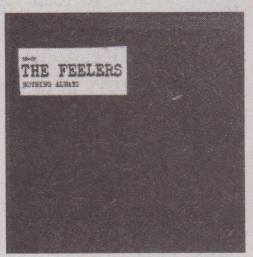
GIUDA – "Decadenza" LP

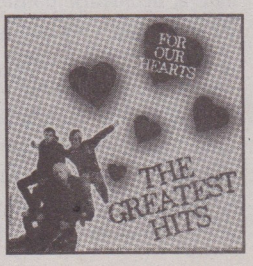
The excellent debut LP from this Italian band made up from the crew of Agipunk Records was a great distinctive take on the low-end TRAGEDY melodic hardcore, though blasted at a faster pace with harsh, scattered Italian screamed over the top. This second, superbly packaged LP pulls in at a way slower and monstrously heavier, metallic pace. There's still fast thrashing with blazing guitar leads at points, but the somber mood and dark edge left by these eight tracks is akin to primal moments of Brazilian crossover hardcore with guttural, throaty vocals and just an absolutely crushing, devastating slowness wrapped in grimy distortion. The lyrics are similar to a lot of classic Italian hardcore—near poetry, with storytelling used to express a bleak worldview. Strongest recommendation for fans of metal-punk hybrids for its lumbering devastation and churning attack. (KS)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

THE GREATEST HITS / LUXURY SWEETS – split EP

I was nervous about this record because of the lurid colors, white sunglasses, and polka dots. Power pop/glam by a bunch of fellas who dress like girls. Don't get me wrong, I *love* power-pop, but it's a fine line between great and shit. It's OK, man, y'know—kinda SWEET meets SHOES or 20/20. Pretty wimpy, well played…but essentially…blah.







The unnecessary solo during the GREATIST HITS song sealed the deal. *Nein, danke*. (TB)
(Desert Island, www.myspace.com/desertislanddiscsseattle)

THE GREATEST HITS / TOUGH SHITS – split EP

I am such an idiot. When I was younger, I was taught that under no circumstances was I ever to judge a book by its cover. I dutifully followed this order, for years upon un-judging years, until today. I am ashamed, people, because when I looked at the picture of THE TOUGH SHITS that adorns their side of this split, I assumed the music would be reminiscent of Janis Joplin. Why? Well, though it pains me to admit it, it's because these guys look like Janis Joplin (except one of them, who's dressed up like a gay Texan pirate). Imagine my surprise when I listened to this, and it actually sounded like undernourished cokehead bar rock! Man, I sure felt dumb then, but listening to the GREATEST HITS side cheered me up. These are men with no pretensions—they're dressed exactly as retarded as they sound. (BB)
(Desert Island, www.myspace.com/desertislanddiscsseattle)

GRUK – "Waiting for the Rapture" CD

Just like Lyz from ANTISCHISM, the singer for this band can belt out some excruciating, throat-tearing vocals and then go right into a mellow, soft-spoken voice at the drop of a dime. How does she do it? And that band's influence is felt heavily here, from well-penned lyrics dealing with issues of war, factory farming, and other fucked up shit, to playing furious hardcore punk that can beat your senses relentlessly with unstoppable force. I can also hear some traces of FILTH and mid-'90s Chicago-area hardcore like CHARLES BRONSON or MK ULTRA. Most of the songs come in like high-speed punches, clocking in at around a minute, so you gotta be able to read fast to keep up with the lyrics! The only thing that I'm not too hot on here is the occasional use of dual vocals with one of the guys in the band, but that's a minor grievance for an overall laudable effort. (BG)
(Gruk, PO Box 4838, Chico, CA 95927, www.grukrocks.com)

GRUK / THE WOBBLIES – split EP

On their side of this li'l split, GRUK plays some thrashy punk with screamy lady vocals and a decidedly political bent. THE WOBBLIES are in a similar line politically, critical of American complacence and greed, but their sound is pop punk in the vein of THE BANANAS or FOUR EYES. It reminds me a little of the original troubadours of the labor movement who would rewrite hymns to be pro-union and anti-state. Maybe the act of phrasing their politics in poppy sing-along-style has the same effect of making their politics relatable to people it wouldn't have reached otherwise? Hope so. (AA)
(Gruk, PO Box 4838, Chico, CA 95927, www.grukrocks.com)

GUN OUTFIT – "On the Beach "EP

I don't know about this. I heard some hype about these kids from Olympia sources, then heard a couple recordings that I didn't really dig. I caught them down here when they played a couple times around town, and it really blew my mind, so I bought this from them, got home, listened to it, didn't really dig it. It's kind of like that indie jangle pop. That late-'80s, early-'90s kind of pre-cursor to grunge. The more bored parts of SONIC YOUTH, a less country sounding MEAT PUPPETS, a more punk PAVEMENT… I dig some of the riffage here, but then they start singing and it just reminds of the cutesy parts of Northwest music that really bore me. GUN OUTFIT fully rips it up live, but somehow this record falls flat. It's not bad, just kind of indifferent. (MM)
(Post Present Medium, PO Box 291301, Los Angeles, CA 90029, www.postpresentmedium.com)

H100S – "Dismantle" 12"

Finally! A reissue of the first EP from this legendary Clevo hardcore act, but now as a 12". It's sloppy and the recording is a little lo-fi, but it's fucking fast and thrashy and unrelenting—hardcore as it was meant to be played. Includes a few bonus tracks, one of which is an instrumental. The cover is a reproduction of the 7" artwork, but silk-screened, and this comes with the original lyric sheet as well as a flyer and a large insert with band photos and information. Limited to 500 and totally essential. (VL)
(SYG, www.sygrecords.com)

HAVE HEART – "Songs to Scream at the Sun" LP

This is actually my first exposure to HAVE HEART, and a handful of tunes on *Songs to Scream at the Sun* are really, *really* great while the others are good. The songs are choppy and mostly heavy, with lots of moody, intricate guitar work and vocals that remind me of the UNBROKEN dude… Definitely more "emotional," musically and lyrically, than a lot of bands from this corner of the hardcore scene. The good songs have a feeling of a preparation for a battle—not like a war but like getting ready to fight your drunk father after he starts punching you in your sleep. There's plenty of tension, anger, frustration, and honesty in this record for being a kind of, '*skyuze* me, mallcore record. (Face it—Bridge Nine is a *huge* label.) Lyrically, this hits home on a few levels too. You see, I come from a *very* long line of abusive, alcoholic, Massachusetts, Catholic-guilt slaves, and a couple songs on this record seem to reference a similar situation to my own—the weird, geographically unique style of sticking to unhealthy traditions whether you believe in them or not, for fear of shaming your family and express a desire to break that cycle. Maybe I'm finding all that in the shadows of these lyrics/songs and it's not really there, but that's what I get out of it. I find it odd that I like this so much. Maybe it's just been a while since I sat down and listened to anything like it. (JU)
(Bridge Nine, www.bridge9.com)

HIGHTOWER – LP

Bay Area metal, and I mean *metal*. The sound is someplace between thrash, math-metal, and NWOBHM. Lots of galloping riffs, vocals you can understand, and a number of instrumentals, guitar solos, and more riffs. I hear a little of THE FUCKING CHAMPS, IRON MAIDEN, and METALLICA. I think this came out three or four years ago on CD. Lyrics of the D&D sort but with a sense of humor. Funny, short dub (yes, dub) instrumental at the end of the LP. (MH)
(Hit the Deck, Kensington PO Box 61222, Calgary, Alberta T2N 4S6 CANADA, www.hitthedeckrecords.com)

HIRED GOONS – "Everything's Coming Up Millhouse" CD

Upon reading the name of the band, without even noticing the rest of the artwork/layout of this CD, the first thing I could think of was an episode of *The Simpsons* where there was a line that went something like, "Nothing some hired goons can't take care of…" Well, this just happens to be referencing that very line. Everything on this CD is a *Simpsons* reference with a strong influence by THE RAMONES. With my penchant for the aforementioned television show and band, I should be eating this right up. Unfortunately, this is too gimmicky for my liking. These people seem like they'd be fun to hang out with and nerd-out on some classic cartoons and whatnot. Unfortunately, the music is less than attention-getting. (BD)
(Stupid Sexy Productions, www.gabbagabbadoh.com)

HJERTESTOP – "Vi Ses I Helvede" LP

Yeah, I know that taste in music is a subjective thing and opinions are like assholes or whatever, but occasionally a certain band comes along, such as HJERTESTOP, that falls into the if-you-don't-absolutely-fucking-love-this-group-then-I-seriously-worry-about-your-so-called-punk-sensibilities class! Finally, here's the full-length from these Danish punks that carries on the magnificence first displayed with their incredible debut EP a couple of years back. Ten tracks of very catchy, raw, and ugly punk rock and roll here, with translations provided

for the bilingually challenged, A nice drugged-out, snotty, and distorted blend of *KBD*-style grooves with early hardcore swank. Imagine some older influences like THE FREEZE and DEAD KENNEDYS, mixed with more recent Scandinavian bands like HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE or YOUNG WASTENERS. Lyrics that I can relate to makes this an instant classic to my ears. Like thinking the world is going to shit, or being society's loser, Word on the street is that a domestic version of *Vi Ses I Helvede* is coming out on No Way, so you'll have no excuse not to track this down. (BG)
(Hjernespind, PO Box 505, 2200 Copenhagen N, DENMARK, www.hjernespind.com)

HOLOCAUST IN YOUR HEAD / MOTORBREATH – split LP

I am absolutely loving this record! It is a meeting of two of the greatest crust 'n' roll bands on the planet right now, with HOLOCAUST IN YOUR HEAD being from Spain and MOTORBREATH from Sweden. Incredibly distorted, alcohol-fueled rock 'n' roll brought to its most logical crusty extreme! (NM)
(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Caracaixent, Valencia, SPAIN, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

HOMOSTUPIDS – "Cat Music" EP

Loud, obnoxious, messy, and furious punk, HOMOSTUPIDS has got all you need. Any band that starts out their record with a bit of guitar tuning has no problem doing whatever they want. In fact, that few seconds made me smile immediately. Why not keep it on the record? When seeing a live band, we suffer through it endlessly. They can even get a little arty like on the end of "Fang vs. Keyman." What can I say? Another great record from HOMOSTUPIDS. (CK)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

HUMAN EYE – "Fragments of the Universe Nurse" LP

HUMAN EYE is the sound of mutant rock—a sprawling dirge of sci-fi-scarred-psychedelic-proto-punk puke rock. CHROME with all the claustrophobic terror removed, and some triumphant historic Detroit-styled fuck-you undercurrents. You could talk a little bit about the fucked-up musical lineage of the Midwest, about ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS for sure, but also about the desolate, post-industrial collapsed landscapes, hollowed-out robber baron mansions, the end of industry and alienation, violence, and thus, music like this. End of the world keyboards, shards of guitars, thick creepy bass—there are a million ideas in the mass of sounds piled on top of one another, like colorful after-party vomit. I can't tell if it's a classic or straight ridiculous, which I think is a positive thing. (LG)
(Hook or Crook, 360 Grand Ave #148, Oakland, CA 94610-4840, www.hookorcrook.com)

HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH – "Goatmeal" 5"

19 songs on a 5" EP!!! Do I need to say much more? Fastcore. And when I say fast, I mean *fast*. They don't go too far into metal or grindcore, and their songs don't change speeds a lot like a lot of powerviolence bands. What this leaves is super fast hardcore and it's great! Short, fast, and loud! In-your-face harsh political/social lyrics. OK, there are a few silly ones like "Battlet-Ode," which is about some video game, but most stick to the serious topics. Not only is their band name great, but they have some good song titles, including "Monarchy Is the Shit." From Boise, ID, this 5" rules. *It's fast!* (MH)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH / CHAINSAW TO THE FACE – split 10"

Two bands with good names and both play some spastic, brutal fastcore. HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH is from Idaho and plays fairly by-the-numbers fast hardcore, whereas CHAINSAW TO THE FACE, as one might guess by their name, is more on the grindcore end of things with a bit of fastcore or powerviolence influence. Nothing groundbreaking, but nothing bad either. (NM)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

IDOL LIPS – "Too Much For the City" CD

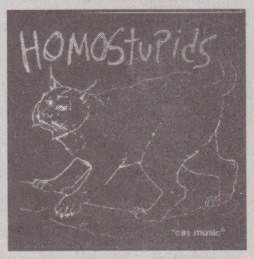
OK…high-contrast images of the band on the cover? Check. Lots of pink and black? Check. Lots of dot patterns in the artwork? Check. Messy typewriter-style font? Check. Everything about this indicates it's gonna be straight-up punk rock 'n' roll without even putting the CD in the stereo…? Yep! No surprises here at all, from the prerequisite Johnny Thunders-esque guitar riffs to the names of the songs like "Kick Your Ass," "Messed Up," and "Rich Bitch." These nine songs all clock in at under two minutes on average, and are not groundbreaking by any means, but this is solid rock 'n' roll and I bet these guys from Italy would be a helluva lotta fun to see live! (ML)
(Zodiac Killer, www.myspace.com/zodiackillerrecords)

THE IGNORANT – "Loaded Statement" CD

This reminds me of early AFI with street punk overtones. Not terribly excited stuff, as this is speedy yet flat sounding with monotone choruses. THE IGNORANT might wanna look up some early CHELSEA to see how simple punk with hooks is done right. (RL)
(Northeast, www.northeastrecords.com)

I HATE THIS / KILLIN' IT – split EP

OK, not my fault for not knowing either of these bands… agreed? So, how the *fuck* am I supposed to know what fucking band is what on a split 7" that has no fucking labels? What I'm guessing (pretty certain) is the I HATE THIS side is cool. It's punk fuckin' rock'—California's MOTHERSPEED is what jumps to mind. The lyrics, the explanations more so, made me like them a bit more than I normally would. Ranging from herbalism to Vonnegut to rape is one thing, but with an individual's idea really laid out, it meant a lot more. KILLIN' IT owns this split though, not merely based on musical merit, but the fact that they thank Jooze! Everyone's favorite (highly) alcoholic energy blackout potion! These dudes rip, holdin' down a thrashy, breakdown-laden, fun times jam entourage. (RM)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)



IMPOSTERS – "Pool Maintenance" EP

THE IMPOSTERS' debut EP offers fairly straightforward hardcore in an ILL REPUTE mode—eight songs of mostly personal rebellion and thankfully, no angst. You'll find occasional guitar stylings that offer a note of distinctiveness amidst the tumult—just enough to make this more memorable than other EPs of its ilk. Or, maybe it's that totally surprising cover of "The Wedge," which offers a relaxing bit of surf to change the pace. A respectable debut. (SS)
(Secret, www.myspace.com/secrechb)

INSOMNIO – "Happy Loneliness" LP

INSOMNIO is a band with melody, drive, and plenty of kick. *Happy Loneliness* mixes elements of pop punk and rock 'n' roll song structure to form a cohesive sound. Most of the songs have a very layered approach that kind of solidifies the all-around feeling of the band. There is a certain beat that they hang on, and I could imagine dancing at their live performances would be very lovely. I do however feel that their *No Escape* LP is a bit more varied. That being said, the guitar harmonies and overall sound of this record is great. They remind me of LEATHERFACE and MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, which is not a bad thing at all. (WK)
(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Caracaixent, Valencia, SPAIN, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

INSUBORDINATE – "Fun" LP

If BL'AST! was around in 2008 and the members were 16 years old, this is what they would sound like. INSUBORDINATE is a young band influenced by the Bridge 9 scene as much as they are by '80s hardcore punk. Not to say that I didn't like this; the only problem I have is that it sounds like it was recorded on Garage Band and nobody even bothered to mix it. I don't see why someone would even bother pressing this on vinyl. Maybe next time they should worry more about how your record sounds, and less on how their layout looks. (PL)
(self-released, no address)

IRON AGE – "The Way Is Narrow/Satori Part 1"

This is my first exposure to IRON AGE, and my first thoughts were, "Wow, those drums sound really wimpy," until I realized it's a 33 and not 45… Correct speed, and man this is *fucking heavy*. Smashed-in-your-face-by-a-ton-of-bricks heavy. THROWDOWN heavy. I could just imagine TEENAGEAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES belting this one out. The A-side has thick metallic riffs and keeps it at a mellow pace with good breakdowns. I was hoping this would open up and have a fast part, but when you're tough as all hell you go at your own pace—people wait for you, not vice versa. The B-side is a cover of "Satori Part 1," originally written by FLOWER TRAVELLING BAND, Japan's version of BLACK SABBATH. Kind of odd and random, but done spot-on. Great record. (VL)
(Painkiller, 516 Green St #1B, Cambridge, MA 02139, www.painkillerrecords.com)

I SCREAM 7 SHOWERS / SISTA SEKUNDEN – split EP

Japan meets Sweden on this split. I SCREAM 7 SHOWERS has an incredibly strange name, but don't let it scare you away because these boys tear into some ripping hardcore tuneage. Their side dominates this disc. On the flip we have SISTA SEKUNDEN. Their side is cool, but something lacks and it might just be the polished production, which smoothers the energy, and that breakdown on the last track is not so hot. Cool to see collaborative projects as such continue to happen. (MS)
(Instigate, www.instigaterecords.com)

JOHNNY CHILDSTAR – "War Movie" EP

Four tracks of gruff, melodic punk with hints of EFFIGIES, SINK, and LEATHERFACE, and a slight undercurrent of metal. Not bad, but not enough for one to get straight onto Murdoch's information highway for an information orgy. (SD)
(Turk Virus, 8532 N. Bristol, Portland, OR 97203, www.johnychildstar.com)

KAH ROE SHI – "Shi" CD

I have heard these guys on a few of their previous releases and have been very impressed by their variety of darkened crust. This full-length did not disappoint. It certainly threw me off with the packaging being a mini burlap sack with their name written in Kanji characters. Admittedly, it took me a couple minutes to figure out this was the killer band from Malaysia KAH ROE SHI! Dark, heavy, and thick crust-core with clear nods to FROM ASHES RISE and HIS HERO IS GONE. The lyrics of this band are especially good with lots of information and details in the booklet. A 13-label Malaysian collaboration. Great! (NM)
(Cactus, www.myspace.com/cactusrecords)

KERIPUKKI / PAHAA VERTA – split EP

KERIPUKKI sticks to the fast 'n' furious hardcore basics. Their sound is marked by trebly guitar and tonsil-torn vocals, which occasionally squeak and crack in the most charming way. No tricks from KERIPUKKI, just plain ol' 'core of the 1980s-Finland-meets-early-Dischord variety. The songs held up throughout the many listens I just gave 'em, proving that sometimes the basics are all ya need. On the flip, PAHAA VERTA also champions the simple hardcore of yore. They have a more burly, NEGATIVE APPROACH-esque sound—tough vocals, stomping rhythms, and an all-around punishing and mean sensibility. The intro of their song "Jumavittu," note-for-note nicks the beginning of JERRYS KIDS' "Cracks in the Wall," so I'd advise PAHAA VERTA be more subtle in their pilferage next time, but other than that I really liked 'em. Solid split. (CI)
(Roku, PL148, 96101 Rovaniemi, FINLAND, www.rokurecords.com)

THE KIDNAPPERS – "Ransom Notes and Phone Calls" LP

A deserved reissue of one of the most underrated punk bands of the last ten years. Super catchy punk that harks back to the days of THE BUZZCOCKS, EATER, and THE BOYS. Coming off as a more rough and ready MARKED MEN, which basically means they sound a hell of a lot like THE REDS. Originally released by Alien Snatch in 2003 and given the new treatment by FDH Records. Pick this gem up then dig deeper into the pockets and get their second LP release on Rip Off Records. A must. (SD)
(FDH, www.fdhmusic.com)

LAHAR – "Obeti Doby" CD

The cover of this release made me think this might be another one of those retro '80s thrash metal releases that I have been seeing quite a bit lately. Turns out I'm not exactly right, although there is a bit of that influence here. These Czech lads are fastcore, to be sure, but there are some echoes of CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER as well as FUCK ON THE BEACH. Couldn't tell you much about the lyrics as they are in Czech. Good stuff! (NM)
(Damage Done, www.damagedonerecords.com)

LANDED – "How Little Will It Take" CD

A compilation CD of most of this long-time Providence, RI band's collected output. I think LANDED is more interesting live than in this form. That's an understatement, and I am finding it really fuckin' hard to write about them—the understatement, the collected output, the live show, the sound on the recording. I think I saw them with PINK AND BROWN and LIGHTNING BOLT at the beginning of the century, so there are the *MRR* standard all-caps band references. I might also mention a less meat 'n' potatoes dude-core Amphetamine Reptile/'90s Touch and Go thing…more sewage 'n' flame retardant pajamas or some shit. You know, one dirge of a riff driven into the ground amidst total disintegration. As reviewer-types would say "put thru the meat grinder of BRAINBOMBS"! Some would say something like that, or maybe they would say FLIPPER, but this is in neither of those last mentioned bands' realm specifically, nor is it in the realm of a meat grinder metaphor. I am sure of it. If you were selling this CD on eBay, you would say VERMIFORM! LOAD RECORDS!

LIGHTNING BOLT! SAM MCPHEETERS LINER NOTES! And maybe you would say BRAINBOMBS, because it seems that's just the thing to do nowadays. (LG)
(Load, www.loadrecords.com)

LAST LIGHTS – "There's No One Good Enough To Be Alone" EP

New-crop hardcore from the Eastern seaboard hittin' hard on this debut 7" from LAST LIGHTS. The energy is really high on these five tracks, blazing through the songs yet keeping the signature hardcore builds, breaks, and mosh one would expect from dudes touring with I RISE and VERSE. Cool riffs and killer drumming—these guys are tight all the way around, really. Production is tops and the artwork is great. I just wish they had sent two copies so I could have one! (RM)
(Mightier Than Sword, 756 Myrtle Ave #4-0, Brooklyn, NY 11206, www.mtsrecords.com)

LEFTY LOOSIE / PEAR OF THE WEST – split EP

PEAR OF THE WEST starts this one out with some nice up-tempo poppy punk with female vocals. Songs dealing with desperation, confusion, and loneliness—things I'm all-too-aware of these days. Why not drink a few to curb those feelings? That's the feeling conveyed here, and while *I* won't be drinking a few, I'd bet many others will, and will enjoy every swig. LEFTY LOOSIE is very similar—catchy pop with female vocals. I hadn't heard of this band last year when they played Thrillhouse and I missed out. I like the song "Fuck This, I'm Out" for the super catchiness. If any of this sounds appealing, go pick it up and give it a listen—you won't be disappointed. (BD)
(Repulsion, 2552 N Booth St, Milwaukee, WI 53212)

LIVE FAST DIE / CAMERO WEREWOLF – "Shit Amplified/By the Time These Flowers Die" LP

The first side of this LP is a recording of a live concert in Milwaukee from 2006—sounds so-so as far as the recording goes. It really reminds me of many, many shows I've been to that I try to forget. I'm reminded of ringing ears, clothes that smell of smoke, and jerks spilling beers on me while they try to talk over the band about something unimportant, but basically a good time and how I spend most of my evenings. The second side seems to be a solo outing from frontman CAMERO WEREWOLF, and it's also so-so. At their best, the songs are catchy and stripped-down, played on guitar with the drums being used simply to keep a beat and not to clutter the songs. It's all lo-fi and distorted. The lyrics are an attempt at being funny and the problem with that is when they are not actually funny they come off as being very stupid and uninteresting, like most songs by KING MISSILE for example. A few of the tunes have strong country influences, and especially when mixed with bad humor, they come off as insincere. Boo. (MU)
(Dusty Medical, PO Box 1981, Milwaukee, WI 53201, www.dustymedical.com)

THE LIVING WRECKS – "Cheap Heat" CD

Very generic mid-to-up-tempo straight-up punk from this band from Baltimore (who I doubt are named after the DEEP PURPLE song, but you never know...). UK82 meets the MySpace generation; it's very much by-the-numbers and uninspired, like a skint GBH. 'Nuff said. (AD)
(Zodiac Killer, www.myspace.com/zodiackillerrecords)

LONDON PX – "Orders" EP

A reissue on sickly blue vinyl of this short-lived UK band's first single, which originally came out in 1981 on New Puritan Records. They've long been a staple of the *KBD* set, so now you can pick up a tidy little 7" version of their plodding prole-punk (somewhere between the ANGELIC UPSTARTS and a punker FALL) of your own. Or, you could wait for the discography LP that is due out on Parts Unknown sometime this decade. The sound of damp Clapham council flats brought to you direct from Italy's glue-sniffing bottom feeders at... (AM)
(Pure Punk, CP 214, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.purepunk.it)

LOVER! – "I'm Not a Gnome" EP

Monotonous, semi-psychedelic one-man garage band vomit from a guy who could stand to make a couple friends. There's some passable ideas here, but the whole record comes off as a sad mistake. On the upside, there're only 300 of these, so maybe he can sell some to his friends and family, and forget about it. (BB)
(Tic Tac Totally, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655, www.tictactotally.com)

THE LUSTIES – "Cocks & Monsters" CD

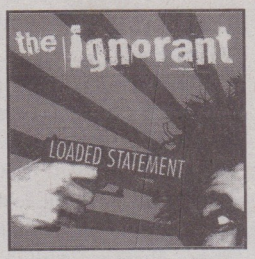
THE LUSTIES sound like HOLE meets LITA FORD meets SOCIAL D, and that's probably giving them too much credit. Song topics include getting laid, unwanted breakups, less than satisfactory relationships, and *lust*. From a utilitarian perspective, this CD is wasteful and unnecessary, and the fact that I am using space in *MRR* to talk about it only furthers that notion. (CI)
(self-released, 3704 W Fullerton Apt. 2, Chicago, IL 60647)

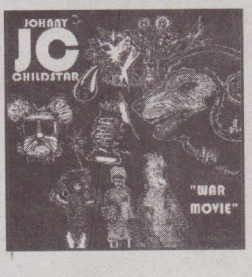
MACHETE – "Too Weird To Die" CD

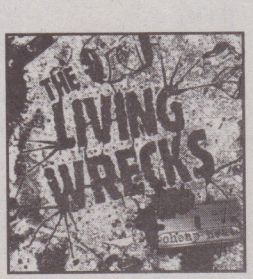
What to make of this...there's a slight stoner-rock vibe a la C AVERAGE or THE FUCKING CHAMPS with some synth, like THE FAINT or something, and some alterna-radio pop-punk guitar. So, part stoner-rock, part pop-punk, and part weird wannabe-hipster bullshitz. Well played, well recorded, well suited to the local hour on their town's alternative radio station. The singer sounds like he should be in a wannabe Top-40 jam *sesh*. The vocals are really off-putting. They have a classic rock vibe through a filter of something like THE STROKES or THE KILLERS. (P$)
(Machete, 1299 Kings Rd, Schenectady, NY 12303, www.myspace.com/wearemachete)

MAJOR ACCIDENT – "Clockwork Demos" LP

Before the needle even hit the vinyl on this I knew I would like it! I was no stranger to MAJOR ACCIDENT, so I knew to expect fast and frantic punk rock. What I didn't have any prior knowledge of was all the great cover songs that they do on this! The *Clockwork Demos* is a collection of demos, as the name implies. From what I can gather, this is possibly the very first studio recording that they every did, so there are a lot of cover songs here, including







THE CLASH ("White Riot" and "Garageland"), STIFF LITTLE FINGERS ("Alternative Ulster" and "Wasted Life"), SHAM 69 ("Borstal Breakout"), and even THE RAMONES ("Suzy Is A Headbanger" and "Blitzkrieg Bop")!! Luckily each and every cover version is done really well and not painful to listen to at all. In addition to all those great covers, there are early versions of some of the classic MAJOR ACCIDENT songs like "Terrorist Gang," "Crazy," and "In the World Today." All in all, the quality of the recording is rough and raw, but totally listenable and does more than enough justice to this classic '80s UK punk band!! As much as MAJOR ACCIDENT is a favorite amongst skins and Oi! boys with all of their *Clockwork Orange* imagery, this is straight-up punk rock that everyone should check out if they haven't done so already!! (ML)
(Durty Mick, 19106 S. Normandie Ave. #311, Torrance, CA 90502, www.durtymickrecords.com)

MASSGRAVE / STORMCROW – split LP

Canada's MASSGRAVE excels at fast grinding crust. Textbook dual vocal assault and beautifully brutal guitars accented by a battering ram of drums and a bulldozer of low end driving everything forward, always and insistently forward. The lyrics don't tread any new ground, but their assault on the blind eye we turn on the ills of the world is visceral and uncompromising. Not my favorite genre, but fuck me if MASSGRAVE is not a perfect example of stench-drenched Scandinavian crust—don yer studded vests, kids! And speaking of stench, the Bay Area's STORMCROW has somehow made it through the *MRR* punk filter once again. Slow plodding heavy metal into double bass and E-chugs galore. I like STORMCROW. STORMCROW is heavy metal. Weed soaked doom, three songs in 20 minutes or so, and if you like 'em, then you surely know the drill by now. (WN)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

MAYYORS – "Megan's LOLZ" EP

Jesus fucking Christ!!! Their second single and they've already achieved world-ending, unbeatable perfection. Effects-heavy, up-tempo punk warble retaining all the weird elements of many of today's kingpins, yet laying them to rest over two short sides. Powerful as hell, mysterious, exciting, and pretty much what everyone needs to hear right now, lost in the oversaturated record market. Buy this. It makes the rest seem pointless. Fuck. (MC)
(Gome, www.mtstmtn.com)

MCRACKINS – "Eggzit" CD

This band is still around? This quasi-novelty trio delivers some killer pop punk here. The lead track, "He Said She Said," is awesome. Play it for your retro power-pop buddies and tell them it's from 1980 to fuck with them. This is much fuller sounding than the MCRACKINS' earlier stuff from 14 years ago! Think THE TRAVOLTAS and THE QUEERS with those BEACH BOYS overtones. This is a great full-length that will surely make my annual top ten. (RL)
(Cheapskate, www.cheapskaterecords.com)

MEGAFUCKERS – "Escalation/Jet Lag"

MEGAFUCKERS is in the post-punk arena but almost sounds a little art-metal or even grunge. This is all right but it veers a little too far into an unpleasant territory... I hate to use "punk" with such an exclusive connotation, but these nearly-ubiquitous jamz are just not punk enough, as in they're almost all-over-the-place, but the places they go all over are not punk places. They aren't weird or cool or different or non-generic. It's not bad, it's just not interesting or fun to listen to. The label is pretty interesting; it seems to chortle out either pretty cool hits or these types of misses. (P$)
(Deleted Art, www.deletedart.org)

DAN MELCHIOR AND HIS MENACE – "She's So Blank" EP

The careering yowl of the vocals brings to mind a weird combination of John Lydon circa *Metal Box,* and maybe early SUBWAY SECT. The music made me think of some of the stranger solo records by has-been heroes of that era (Vic Godard, Pete Shelley), but also somehow the sparse doom/dirge of THE DIRTY THREE. This is an unpleasant record. It's the metallic taste after you get your cavities filled; a sour, bitter old man sound. (LG)
(Almost Ready, PO Box 4034, Attleboro, MA 02703, www.almostreadyrecords.com)

MIDDLE AMERICA – "It Repeats" EP

This tense hardcore features pummeling, trebly guitars and growled vocals to make a distinctively aggressive package, especially on "Out of My Head," with its crazed guitars edged with feedback. All four songs (save maybe "Anxiety," which isn't as tightly composed as the remainder) demonstrate a commanding sense of style, though a lyric sheet would have been helpful. With such a bounty of rage, it would have been nice to know what they were angry about. Thoroughly commending, in its style. (SS)
(Home Invasion, homeinvasionrecords@gmail.com)

MIKAZUKI BAKUONDAN – "Judgement Truth" EP

I don't know how to review this. I was told MIKAZUKI BAKUONDAN has members of PAINTBOX. This EP is on the juggernaut label H:G Fact and it's rocking, has a mid-tempo backbeat, and group choruses that are unrelenting. MIKAZUKI BAKUONDAN is reminiscent of late-'90s Japcore bands, and is catchy as all get-out, yet I'm left stupefied. "Judgement Truth" is the clear winner of the two tracks and leaves me wanting more. This appetizer of a platter is hopefully just the tease of a feast to come. (RR)
(H:G Fact, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

MOSQUITO BANDITO – "Woo Woo Woo" EP

One-sided, four-song blowout courtesy of this one-man bash. Every tune is naturally raw, with a fair amount of garage-y blues fare, like virtually everything else of this ilk. I struggle to find a reason why anyone would pick this up over any other one-man band's record, as so many in the game are operating at the same middle-of-the-road level that it's difficult to find *any* of it compelling outside of BBQ and few others. If you know what the "OMB" tag is and you cream for it, knock yourself out. If you've already had your fill, this will not reignite your interest. (MC)
(Boom Chick, www.boomchickrecords)

MOTHERFUCKERS – "I Wanna Be A Cop... So I Can Fuck You Up!!" EP

Their label says they are Calgary's oldest and ugliest band, and with a cartoon of a cop ass searching a punk rock skater, what's not to like? Nothing special here, just meat 'n' taters bar punk. Six songs about being punk (I think, no lyrics) and living your life outside the rules, man. Fast and tight and almost street punk at times (the backing vocals give it that feel I think). File this one with BAR FEEDERS, PORTRAIT OF POVERTY, SUBMACHINE, and the like. (WN)
(Handsome Dan, www.handsomedanrecords.com)

THE MUTATORS – "Secret Life" LP

Parts of this record remind me of the late-'80s lived-in, muscled-up, deconstructed garage-no-wave of PUSSY GALORE or early ROYAL TRUX. It just has the sound of the bands that emerged in the post-SST, Manson-obsession era, with the blankness and venom of the no wave. The vocals are reminiscent of the girl from XYX or Jenna from THE TYRADES—that XYX aggro-sing song-style disintegrating into TYRADES total balls-out-blood-vengeance. Actually, I think the frantic fury of THE TYRADES would be a good reference point for this band, just in terms of energy and bile, but add in some "Death Valley 69" and a definite nod to TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS. It's so easy and dull to make music a weird period drama—that simulated no wave sound as proven by the so-called revival of the early-'00s. MUTATORS, however, has har-

nessed the idea, and has so clearly made it their own. It doesn't come off like a stilted theatrical rehearsal of a past sound. This is a really cool and genuinely exciting record, and a sure indication that the Vancouver scene is currently producing some fucked-up, compelling musical combinations… I think the current singer is a new one since the last 7" I got for review, and I have to say she's fucking incredible and makes the band. (LG)
(Nominal, 726 Richards St, Vancouver BC, V6B 3A4 CANADA, www.nominalrecords.com)

MUTATORS / NIGHT WOUNDS – split EP

In this split is all of the excitement of first hearing FLIPPER. By making songs so unintended to resemble songs or to please in general, each band has made a sound impossible to ignore, and one that appeals, despite its seeming lack of trying. MUTATORS succeeds in this point a little better with cutting and wild female vocals and compelling martial rhythms. NIGHT WOUNDS has more of a dark resignation to them, and an almost perfect counterbalance to the fierce and visceral sound of MUTATORS. (AA)
(Bad Master, 4941 Hazel Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19143, badmasterrecords@gmail.com)

NIÑOS EN KOMBATE – "Niños en Kombate" EP

Brazilian transplants living in Nagoya, Japan. I got to see this band live and I must say they hold true to their roots. NIÑOS EN KOMBATE plays aggressive hardcore punk with metallic influences. Their sound is reminiscent of mid-era RATOS DE PORAO. Nice and chaotic shit here. All songs are sung in Portuguese. Cool. (MS)
(Too Circle, toocir@xd5.so-net.ne.jp)

NO TALK – "Invade Iran/Fear the CIA"

Two-song 7" that was probably sold out before I put it on the ol' turntable. The A-side's main riff reminds me of BLACK FLAG, but I can't remember which jam. Is it a copout to say this sounds like BLACK FLAG? I think everyone is derivative of BLACK FLAG, so comparing it to them is akin to notifying you that NO TALK plays music. The B-side, with its drumming, totally reminds me of THE DICKS, even more than the A-side reminds me of BLACK FLAG. However, where these tracks diverge from their forefathers are the better production (this ain't no Spot manipulation), and the singer's thick, gruff vocals. While the mental gymnastics that drew me to my conclusions were not all that difficult of a floor routine, these songs *are* much different, also reminding me of JESUS LIZARD in the way that the riff is played over and over and over again. Cool record, but good luck tracking one down. (VL)
(Rescued From Life, c/o Clay Newell, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, rescuedfromlife@yahoo.com)

OBLITERATION – "Megatons" EP

I don't think anyone walking around with a MOB 47 or ANTI-CIMEX patch these days could possibly say that they didn't like this record at least a little bit. I have to admit I was a skeptic because of the obvious contrived nature of bands that purposely make themselves a secret. In the end, the slicing solos and perfect production won out. This record nails the Swedish early hardcore sound perfectly and could easily stand up to some Portland classics of the same style. The lyrics are of course all about bombs and war, but it fits the music like a glove. OBLITERATION does just that! Track it down.
(WK)
(Nita, 516 Green St. Unit 1B Cambridge, MA 02139 USA, nitalabel@gmail.com)

ORDINARIA HIT – "Bricoleur" CD

A rad São Paolo based DIY post-punk band—more THE EX than GANG OF FOUR though, so unfurrow that worried brow. There's a dub-y spaced-out, early FUGAZI influence adding to some late-period FUGAZI influence, which is most detectable in some of the guitar parts. I don't know; this is pretty cool. ORDINARIA HIT reminds me of '90s DC shit like THE METAMATICS, less experimental maybe, more post-hardcore, or like I said post-FUGAZI. They also reference NO MEANS NO, BIG BOYS, and MINUTEMEN. The band recorded and released this themselves. The lyrics and liner notes are in Portuguese but deal with the DIY ideal…how to make it a way of life, and a movement as opposed to a sub-cultural moment. There's something about this band that is charming and sharp… Totally worth checking out. (LG)
(Fuckitall, alexandretool@yahoo.com.br, www.ornidariahit.net)

OVER VERT – "Gagging and Swallowing" CD

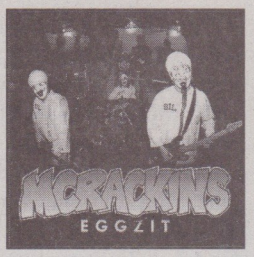
Churning, bass-driven art-rock out of Reno. Imagine NOMEANSNO bass lines with a more casual approach to the rudiments of drumming and timekeeping, hardcore guitars, and a singer from the SCRATCH ACID/JESUS LIZARD school of ironic detachment and saliva going all over the place. Got it? That's pretty much what OVER VERT has going on. Also they do a VAE VICTIS (pre-IRON LUNG) cover. (AM)
(Renova, 630 Lander St, Reno, NV 89509, oververt@live.com)

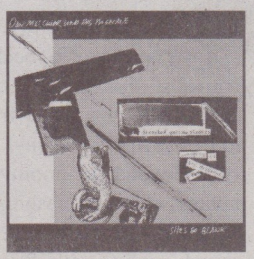
PERFORMING FERRETS – "No One Told Us" CD

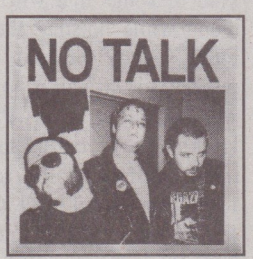
Messthetics unearths and compiles the discography of yet another obscure DIY act. PERFORMING FERRETS (sometimes the PERFORMING FERRET BAND and sometimes simply FERRETS) grew out of the early-'80s UK DIY cassette culture, but also released an EP and LP before parting ways. Their dryly shambolic celebrations of student bedsit culture come off like a combination of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, WAT TYLER, and (early on at least) THE SHAGGS. It's great stuff and as usual for Hyped To Death, it comes complete with extensive and informative liner notes. Chalk up another winner, Nigel! (AM)
(Messthetics/Hyped To Death, PO Box 351, Westminster, MA 01473, info@hyped2death.com)

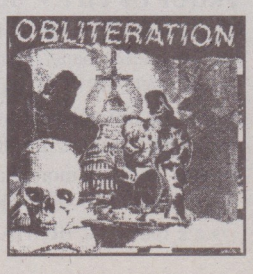
THE PNEUMONIAS – "Cheap Trash Rock and Roll" CD

I had to laugh when I picked up this CD. Is this a reject from Rip Off Records or did the band just want to be on the label so bad, but couldn't be bothered to ask Greg Lowery? The cover has that Rip Off look, and the label is even called Zodiac Killer Records. I mean, c'mon. Fortunately, when I stopped judging this CD by its cover









and got it into the player I was pleasantly surprised. Yes, the Rip Off influence is there, but fortunately, it's more of the early years. THE PNEUMONIAS take all that baggage and deliver a great punk record. Fast furious songs with stupid lyrics and the production is *loud*. A good time. Too bad the Purple Onion still isn't around. (CK)
(Zodiac Killer, www.myspace.com/zodiackillerrecords)

PNS – "Nakazeni and Prokleti" EP

Five tracks of apocalyptically themed fast hardcore from this veteran Czech Republic band. Following a CD from 2007, this appears to be the first PNS vinyl in their ten-year history!!! Beyond the doomy intros, this is raging, upbeat, chaotic thrashing that winds around a complex melodic core. Noisy demo/blown out sound quality with fuzzed out guitars and a "pounded boxes" drum sound—scalding vocals trade off with more gruff low-end screams. Dark, bleak lyrics translated in English from Czech. Killer! (KS)
(PapagaJuv Hlasate, www.myspace.com/pnspunx)

PROHIBITION – "Sorry for the Inconvenience" EP

Well, by now Repulsion Records has established itself as having a distinct sound. If you're familiar with their past releases, this record will be exactly what you're expecting. And like most of their past efforts, this one is good too. The songs aren't all that original, but they are played well and catchy. For the most part this 7" sounds very reminiscent of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS' first LP, all with a slight taste of good SCREECHING WEASEL. The first song on the B-side has a strong DILLINGER FOUR feel to it. The last song is actually kind of irritating—a bit too many "yeah, yeah, yeahs" and "nah, nah, nahs" for my taste. As a whole, these are the kind of songs that will have the kids singing along while hoisting their 40s in the air, but totally annoy the crap out of the old jaded punks. So, if you're over 25 years old, be warned, this is a very "bubblegum and PBR" kind of record, but all in all, I like it. The first three quarters of the record kick ass. Solid record, on a solid label. (FS)
(Repulsion, 2552 N Booth, Milwaukee, WI 53212)

PROOF OF LIFE – "Hate Reborn" CD

PROOF OF LIFE is a "heavy-hittin" tough guy metalcore band from Germany that's similar to HATEBREED and TERROR. This goateed hardcore quartet brings you fast and brutal songs with *moshtastic* breakdowns. Singer Jan sounds like a demon spawned from hell when belting out his self-help lyrics and backing vocals that give BIOHAZARD a run for their money. But don't be fooled, these guys don't look like no motivational speakers; they look like they would not be afraid to put a bat to your face. (PL)
(no label info, www.proofoflife.de)

PSYCHO – CD/DVD

Wow, who'da ever thunk it… This disc is a collection of PSYCHO's releases between 1988-1991, when they first dropped Mega and became a three piece. PSYCHO was (still is?) a band that has always slipped through the cracks in their home (Boston) and abroad and was never really appreciated. They're fucking mutants! Contained on this disc is the *You Love Us…You Hate Us* LP, *Riches & Fame* 10", *Fuck Off Live* 7", and split with OUT COLD. The highlight here is the first half of *Riches & Fame*—that record is a fucking smoker! PSYCHO has always played ripping fairly straightforward hardcore, but *Riches & Fame* found PSYCHO on par, in sound and execution, to UK hardcore greats RIPCORD. I don't mean that lightly either. So good. I think what always kept PSYCHO down is the fact that they always retained a B-movie campy-ness to them. Like I said, mutants. On the DVD, there's a live set of the band playing at TT The Bears in 1987. It was hard for me to see what was happening when I watched this 'cause the sun was beating straight down on the screen, but the sound quality is great and the band really had the RIPCORD feel going on at that point. It's fitting these songs see a re-ish with all the sub-par recordings of every '80s hardcore band popping up for release, and while I can't say this is essential, it's definitely worthy. (JU)
(Ax/ction, PO Box 425623, Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA 02142)

QUESTION – "Insanity" EP

Fuck man, I saw this band play in the basement of Thrillhouse Records a couple of weeks ago, and I was totally blown away. It was the perfect setting for this ferocious attack of short, fast, and fucking loud hardcore. Just as the Thrillhouse basement laid waste to any boring ass adult bar-punk scene, QUESTION lays waste to stagnation with their music and attitude. This six-song EP starts off full speed ahead and does not let up until five songs in with the title track, "Insanity," when they kick out a TOTALITÄR-style fist pumper. Great raw recording that captures the live sound of this band. Lyrics are on the positive tip and deal with utilizing what is around you to realize your dreams and staying strong in an insane world. Although, positivity usually makes me wanna vomit, it's easier to stomach coming from a punk woman playing in a killer hardcore band as opposed to a 15-year-old youth-crew douchebag from Connecticut. Check this one out. (SE)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

RABIES – "Down the Drain" EP

Sub-heavy metal with harmonica that sounds like BLACK SABBATH if they'd started in the late '90s and recorded an EP at their second practice. The only piece of advice my daddy ever gave me was, "It's a dog eat dick world," but what he shoulda said was, "Never buy a RABIES record". But he didn't, so I did, and to be honest, I'm OK with it. Hey, at least it's better than CRITICAL PICNIC. (BB)
(Eliminator, eliminatorrecords@gmail.com)

RAMMING SPEED – "Brainwreck" CD

This is one of those, "I wish this album was only half as long" CDs. Unfortunately, RAMMING SPEED is not metal or punk enough to kick my ass. Seems that these guys are aiming for that mid-to-late-'80s crossover viciousness, which they show promising signs of reaching. The solos shred, the riffs are good, the dudes look brutal, and the lyrics are politically conscious ("The Threat…" "Arrested Development") and responsible ("Immigrant Song"), as well as awesome ("Shane Embry is the Brad Pitt of Grindcore"!!!) All in all, these guys fall a bit short of raging in my book, but I'd go to their show reppin' my TERRORIZER shirt and a SUICIDAL cap feeling right at home. (RM)
(Teenage Disco Bloodbath, www.tdbrecords.com)

RAT PATROL – "Ibiza Kepone" CD

I was ignorant to the fact that this band has been rocking around the Netherlands since 1988. RAT PATROL plays a classic style of hardcore somewhere between KILL YOUR IDOLS and NEGETIVE APPROACH. One problem I had with this record… How can a band from the Netherlands have a song about Arnold Schwarzenegger being a shitty governor? That's worse than DOA singing "Fucked Up Ronnie." With that said, I thought it was actually a pretty good idea to name the song "Total Recall" and incorporate the Governator's famous one-liners in the lyrics of the song. Slightly cheesy, but good. It's just a shame that it took a band from the Netherlands to finally do it. (PL)
(Highly Obscure, www.ratpatrol.nl)

RAVAGED – "Payback" EP

RAVAGED comes straight out of Belgium with a four-song single of pretty straight ahead hardcore with a bit of Japcore's sweeping-style riffs thrown in there. The shredded vocal style really gives this thing a good edge. Both songs on the A-side are rippers, but I wish that they were both a bit shorter. Even though the riffs

and vocals are enough to make the songs interesting, it gets redundant. The B-side starts off with more of a rocking tune, and it just doesn't really work. I guess that they were pacing themselves, because the fourth and final track, "You Wife Beating Piece of Shit," is a supercharged hardcore punk sprint to the finish line. This is a cool release worth picking up. I look forward to the next one, hopefully with one less verse/chorus. (SE)
(Ravaged For Life, ravagedforlife@yahoo.com)

RAW POWER – "Screams from the Gutter" LP

By my count, this is the third reissue of *Screams from the Gutter* in the new millennium, and I for one am glad to see this classic staying in print. In fact, I'd consider it one of the top five European hardcore LPs released in the '80s, so naturally every punker out there deserves a chance to pick it up. This particular repress is on the same label that first put it out in 1985 and faithfully reproduces the original artwork and lyric sheet. The backbone of *Screams from the Gutter* is its timeless batch of simple but catchy and rockin' songs, but there are also so many cool little quirks that make this record memorable and great—the weird, garish, and singular artwork, the two vocalists' excited but completely garbled delivery, the metallic solos, the cowbell, the repeated use of the word "bastard" in the lyrics, and of course the picture on the back cover of the guitarist with the huge afro and pointy shoes. *Screams from the Gutter* is a band perfectly captured at their prime. You need this! (CS)
(Toxic Shock, PO Box 2091, Tucson, AZ 85702, www.toxicranchrecords.com)

THE REAL MCKENZIES – "Off the Leash" CD

Hahaha *MRR*, thanks for this fuckin' piece to review! Now I'd never heard THE REAL MCKENZIES prior to this painful moment, sitting here at my computer. I knew they existed, and I knew I didn't want anything to do with them. Alas, here I am staring at the back of their CD case cringing at these dudes with streaked "punk" hair, Hot-Topic threads, and the wild we're-so-crazy-and-candid photo pose. Every song has a really annoying bagpipe, they are all mid-tempo with very unimaginative song writing and lyrics. I like the early DROPKICK MURPHYS EPs, and FLOGGING MOLLY too, although I haven't listened to them in quite a bit, and THE POGUES are fucking gods, but these assholes have nothing to do with any of the aforementioned bands, aside from maybe trying to make a buck on *their* gimmick. This sucks. (RM)
(Fat Wreck Chords, www.fatwreck.com)

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY – "Destroy All Evidence" CD

Punk rock Rip Van Winkels, J Robbins and Vic Bondi, are back with another broadside from their anti-Bush studio project, REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY. Their first album, from a few years ago, was a rebuke of the Bush administration coated in the driving rhythms and melodic guitar riffs you'd expect from the JAWBOX/ARTICLES OF FAITH talent pool. Time is running out on Bush's term in office so they must have decided to get one more album in before Barack Obama gets elected and we can all go back to being middle class. Oh dear, only four songs in and we've got an acoustic protest ballad. OK, I know I'm mocking, and to be fair, the intentions of this band/record are entirely honorable; it's just that the music is so heavily overproduced and earnest that it isn't doing anything for me. I'm happy for them that they're doing it though, if you get my drift. Besides, the Obama presidency is far from a foregone conclusion, so who knows, maybe they'll have four years of McCain/Palin to sing about next time around, heavens *forfend*... (AM)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092, www.alternativetentacles.com)

THE RETURNERS – "Love Like Suicide" CD

Four tracks of horror punk that's as scary as the ghost train at the local county fair. Too clean for my discriminating palate, and with too much eyeliner, devil locks, and that evil stare for me to even start taking it seriously. News flash dudes, THE MISFITS were dirty, nasty, and radio unfriendly. You lot, on the other hand, are squeaky clean and contenders for every crappy so-called commercial alternative radio station the length and breadth of the USA. (SD)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/thereturneral3)

THE RETURNERS – "We Die Alone/Love Like Suicide"

Hey RETURNERS, what the fuck are you going for? Whatever it is, if it's something other than a parody, you failed. Holy shit! This *is* some sort of punk (fake deathpunk, attempted MISFITS worship, etc.) with sadly comedic falsetto vocals. I don't know what else to say. (JU)
(self-released, www.nothingbutanightmare.com)

RHYTHM SYNDROM – "Cobwebs From The Empty Skull" EP

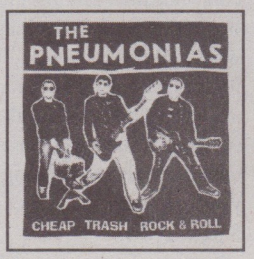
People, if you are going to go through the trouble of releasing a record, why have shitty pixilated art? Ahhhhhh...fucking computers. Horrendous art aside, this is a pretty ripping disc. Super lo-fi early'-80s style 'core—kinda like a mono version of the DAYGLO ABORTIONS or an ADOLESCENTS LP on 45. I'm digging. (TB)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

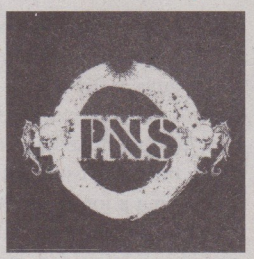
RYDELLS – "Rock 'n' Roll is the Answer" CD

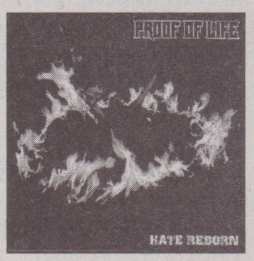
This band looks like THE RAMONES, sounds like THE RAMONES, and probably smells like THE RAMONES but they don't stink. Like with the old band HEAD, why? RAMONES tribute bands doing their own songs. A good copy, but why listen to a copy when you can listen to... Although this could work live for the fresh cuts. Also, this features George Tabb singing "Wart Hog." (RL)
(Cabana 1, 3231 Business Park Dr., Suite C-309, Vista, CA 92081, www.cabana1records.com)

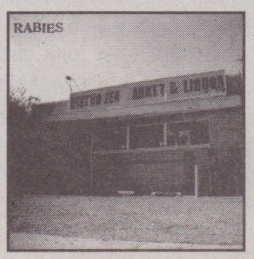
SCUM NOISE – LP

Brazil's SCUM NOISE has banged out brutal, raw crust hardcore since the early '90s, but finally, after innumerable splits, comps and CDs, sees a proper 12" LP release. In many ways this is positively reminiscent of the great Discrust wave from the '90s, blasted from Japan, Scandinavia, and Brazil—the timeless noisy "mid-fi" charge of DIS-









CHARGE/CHAOS UK reverberations and regurgitations from all over the globe. Not marked with the overwhelming metallic influences, high-end production, and slick delivery of a lot of modern crust (or even current Brazilian hardcore), these nine tracks (and an intro) rely on the tried-and-true classic basics of stripped down heavy riffage in that Dis-vein, and also mix in the wild Brazilian hardcore adaptation of making super high energy hardcore, but then having the songs amazingly last two or three times the length of thrash from anywhere else in the world. This makes for a stamina destroying, hypnotic, and positively explosive effect. Top this with brutal guttural vocals, fueled by snapping thrash beats as this blasts unrelentingly devastating one after the next, and you now know what record you should pick up! Killer! (KS)
(Starving Times, c/o Nick Daniels, PO Box 1884, Oakland, CA 94619)

SEASICK – "Ouroboros" LP

This release is fucking fantastic. The SEASICK guys really have a top notch release with *Ouroboros*. The music is diverse, keeping shit raw, fast and pissed, but mixing it up with chop beats, breakdowns, breakneck speed, intelligent lyrics, sing a longs, as well as killer tempo and riff changes. Uh, *bring it*! On top of all this, the record is a one-sided, etched 12" with a pretty rad serpent eating itself on the back! This is modern hardcore played in the same vein as RUINER (but not as melodic and better) or like a less crucial HOPE CONSPIRACY. (RM)
(Soul Rebel, www.myspace.com/xsoulrebelrecordsx)

SENSELESS APOCALYPSE – "Unpolluted" CD

Brilliant grind/noise/fastcore from SENSELESS APOCALYPSE—their first record since 2002's *Senseless Stereotyped*. Shizuoka's blurr masters have not mellowed with age, as these tunes are more indiscernible than ever at times. Then they launch into fastcore that will melt your face, but not before annoying you with disjointed noise and pseudo free jams for about twelve seconds. If FAT DAY was a chaotic grind band, they would be SENSELESS APOCALYPSE. Manabu's vocals are even more demented than I remember them, a total garbled mess, and the drums could be on a shitty tech grind record if SENSELESS APOCALYPSE wasn't so fucking excellent. They still keep you on your toes with bizarre intros and interludes that rarely last long enough for you to forget that your throat is being ripped out by this onslaught. This is essential for fans of Japanese fastcore/power violence like FUCK ON THE BEACH or SLIGHT SLAPPERS, but the more adventurous grind freaks should take the plunge as well (if you haven't already, that is). OLD LADY DRIVER meets CAPITALIST CASUALTIES at a burrito joint, and they pick up a street musician to write their songs, but then they take his banjo, trade it for weed and beer, and they make this record. Man, that would be cool. (WN)
(H:G Fact, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

SHEGLANK'D SHOULDERS – "Final Grind" EP

Snotty street punk 'n' roll outta Calgary, Canada. Decent energy and drive on this disc. Two originals and a song by "Some Nazi fuckheads" as quoted on the lyric sheet. Funny you would call SKREWDRIVER "Nazi fuckheads" yet cover their song. (MS)
(Handsome Dan, www.sheglankd.com)

THE SIDEKICKS – "Sam" EP

Great bursting melodic punk that immediately brings to mind WESTON and the GET UP KIDS. Upbeat, poppy anthems that are very well written and played. Apparently THE SIDEKICKS are from Cleveland, so if you live in Ohio, support them and don't let them go the way of THE GC5. These kids have this shit down pat. There's so much bad shit like this out there that the good shit gets swallowed up by the bad. Know what I'm saying? They also sound a *lot* like THE ARRIVALS…might even be better (sorry guys). Very good. (AD)
(Whoa-oh, www.whoaohrecords.com)

THE SINKS – "Beat Out My Brains" EP

Woah, am I in a fucking 1990's time warp? Totally generic straight ahead garage rock. Though this probably would have made the staff of *MRR* cream their collective pants ten years ago. It's '60s frat rock with none of the power of THE SONICS, none of the energy of THE WAILERS, and none of the genuine weirdness of THE MONKS. The B-side is way better than the A-side, which for me was an instant coma-inducing write off… I don't know. I feel like there are so many cool fucked up, new/old mutant musical ideas happening in the context of the current "garage" scene that it's kind of depressing hearing a generic frat rock 7". I wanna hear shit that sounds doomed 'n' disgusted. THE SINKS make me think of a '60s home movie of parties full of the bored daughters of captains of industry rather than depraved maniacs losing their shit to the now sound… (LG)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

SKINTIGHT JAGUARS – "The Curse" CD

This is a wild little CD. Total MOTÖRHEAD worship combined with a heavy dose of straightedge-inspired song writing—I'm talking gang vocals and all. I also hear a lot of DEAD BOYS in this. This will get you circle pitting for sure! Pretty intense shit. Think BLOOD BROTHERS without the cocaine. Well, at least *Burn Piano Island Burn*-era BLOOD BROTHERS, as I have no idea what they sound like nowadays. (FS)
(Zodiac Killer, www.zodiackillerrecords.com)

THE SLEAZE – "Smokin' Fuckin' Cigs and Other Hit!" EP

Remember when Fashionable Idiots put out some OK generic hardcore records? Well, now they put out *shit*! Fuck, this is awful. Sounds like some dudes who gave up playing said generic hardcore and decided to jump on the garage rock bandwagon. (A bit late. Maybe no one told them indie rock/twee pop are the latest hype.) The singer wishes he was Doc Dart of THE CRUCIFUCKS, but he ain't. The music…boring, generic garage punk. (RR)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

SLUP – "Miasma" CD

The CD artwork is mostly black with shades of brown and is covered with skulls and the record label is named Horror Business, so it was a surprise when I threw this in and heard '90s sounding poppy punk with heavy rock leanings. My first thought was ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. They have a lot of similarities in that the songs are slick and super catchy—I'm conflicted. This is very commercial sounding and well-produced slick rock with very little punk, but on a handful of songs the hooks really grabbed me. HOT WATER MUSIC, LEATHERFACE, and maybe a little SAMI-AM… The super poppy ska-lite track "Soulseller" stinks, as does the ballad, "Strange Relations," and the slick pop track "Tied." The rest of the songs have guitar hooks galore and solid catchy vocals. (MH)
(Horror Business, www.horrorbiz.de)

SMARTBOMB – "Diamond Heist" CD

Generic melodic hardcore that I'm not into—fast stuff with minimal hooks. Although I can't say this is metal, this does make me wanna pull out some MEGADETH to hear some real chops behind monotone vocals. Almost NOFX-style without the jokes or maybe faster STRIKE ANYWHERE without Thomas. I hope I can find "Holy Wars: the Punishment Due" before bedtime. I thank this band for a trip down memory lane, but that's all I thank them for. (RL)
(Think Fast, www.thinkfastrecords.com)

SOCIALCIDE – "Unapproachable" LP

I wasn't wildly impressed by SOCIALCIDE's debut, but the long player is *smoking*. Blueprint early-'80s hardcore from the No Way/Grave Mistake camp—this breaks no new ground, but is hard as fuck in that Boston

Xclaim way. Y'know DYS, SSD, et al? You could name-check GOVERNMENT WARNING, LIFE TRAP, etc. for current references. Twelve minutes? Perfect. (TB)
(Even Worse, Saenredamstraat 44-2, 1072 CH Amsterdam, HOLLAND, noel@outlet.nl)

LES SOLDES – "Les Soldes" EP

A rather mysterious, possibly French, band. All I can seem to find is a translation to the balances, a French inventory reduction sale. That doesn't seem to apply to the record I have on my turntable. The music is mostly garage, but a bit indie rock combining a Fender Jaguar guitar, a Farfisa organ, and a drum machine. The result is pretty good. The more rockin' garage-y tunes are really great. Fortunately, three of the four songs are in that style. Then there is the slow indie rock ballad "Comedie." It is not bad per se, but the record would have been great without it. (CK)
(self-released, no address)

THE STATE LOTTERY – "Cities We're Not From" LP

I really enjoy doing reviews because of records like this. I've never heard of these guys before, but they sound like something I'd get into pretty easily. This seems like it's influenced by later '80s rock with a kind of PAUL WESTERBERG element. Imagine that mixed with bands like ONE REASON or maybe even some of the faster WEAKERTHANS songs. The vocals even sound slightly like MIKE NESS—kinda scratchy at times. THE STATE LOTTERY takes it beyond the stripped-down three-chord structure and adds some instrumentation that shows that they actually know how to play. Shit, there's even a trombone on one of the songs, but you probably wouldn't know it if they didn't point it out in the liner notes. This is on colored vinyl, if that matters to you. (BD)
(Salinas, PO Box 2802, Detroit, MI 48202, www.unshadowed.com/salinas)

STRUT & SHOCK – "Damn You Devil, Let Me Go" CD

Judging from the cover art I was not expecting much, and I was wrong. STRUT & SHOCK is like a darker BANGS. It's got Arzu from SELBY TIGERS, and the music is pretty straightforward driving punk power pop that's really good with surf-tinged melodies, dirty sounding fuzz, and an unrelenting beat. Seems like one of those rock 'n' roll bands that's just about fucking shit up and having fun. (MM)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/strutandshock)

SUGARBOMBS – "The Game, Not the Rules" CD

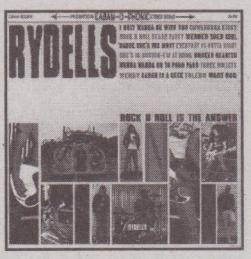
I was immediately turned off by the over-polished production of this. SUGARBOMBS plays poppy melodic hardcore punk and sounds like a hybrid of bands such as HOT WATER MUSIC, newer BAD RELIGION, and H2O. Needless to say, I didn't care for this one too much, but if you're into the bands listed above, check this one out. (PL)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/sugarbombs)

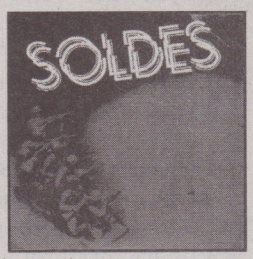
SURRENDER – "Paper Thrones" LP

From here in San Francisco, SURRENDER plays very genuine sounding anarcho-punk (or what used to be called "peace punk" on these shores) circa early–'80s UK style (I went out for breakfast in my neighborhood last week and they were blasting the LOST CHERREES in the restaurant! Where else in the world would that happen?) This could easily have been on Crass Records or Mortarhate back in the day. SURRENDER is more melodic than the bleak post-punk of some of those bands. Their songs are up-beat and mid-tempo with plenty of change-ups and hooks, and their anger isn't tempered by cynicism or predictability. With the dual male/female vocals, and the American accents they remind me a lot of A STATE OF MIND (and to a lesser extent SLEEPING DOGS) and early THE EX and CHUMBAWAMBA. This was my favorite kind of music when I was growing up, and I certainly would have been into SURRENDER had they been around back then. This kind of stuff never really took off here in the States the way it did in Britain, where it was huge until everything went crusty. The subjects are all still very relevant today, as SURRENDER sing "...But this time Kabul's Nicaragua and Baghdad's El Salvador," which of course is very true. When they mess around and even throw in some sax they make me think of New York's FALSE PROPHETS. KARMA SUTRA and Ireland's PARANOID VISIONS are other good reference points. Aside from me droning on and on about old bands this definitely stands up on it's own it the contemporary world. The lyrics are well thought out, the songs well written, and the vocals well sung. I'd totally recommend this to anyone who likes political punk that's more than just boy's noise. Oh, it takes me back... Very good. (AD)
(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.thrillhouserecords.com)

SYPHILITIC VAGINAS – "Complete Studio Collection" CD

Well, that isn't just a fancy title, this disc contains all 34 original songs and one cover ("Making Love With Devil" by ZOUO) that SYPHILITIC VAGINAS has recorded to date. The collection runs in reverse chronological order with the best tracks being the newer ones. I can't help but feel awkward every time someone asks what I'm listening to and I have to answer "SYPHILITIC VAGINAS." Source of the name aside, I just find it awkward to say. What-*ever*, this band is one of my faves at this moment. While the earliest recordings of this band were more in line with the murderous sounds of *Detestation*-era GISM, ZOUO, or any of that early Japanese metal-punk, the newer stuff stays heavily with that formula but leans more to *Military Affairs Neurotic* and adds in some NWOBHM-style screams. The playing and solos, or should I say wizardry, present in these songs is incredible and seems to get better with every release. This band has been somewhat a mystery to me but upon closer inspection appears to be the work of the same man behind NETJAJEV SS, that clever Swede, Magnus Lundberg. Metalheads, GISM fanatics, thrashers, and grindheads take note, this band is on top of the motherfuckin' game right now and motherfuckin' *bad ass*! (JU)
(Rescued From Life, c/o Clay Newell, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, rescuedfromlife@yahoo.com)





TAFKATA – "Worker And Parasite" LP

Such a killer stoner riff takes up the first five minutes or so that I thought I might be in for a full LP of sludge and doom, deliberately crushing and heavy shits. I am loving this so far. When the tempo picks up, my interest wanes slightly, nothing too exciting here, but then it slows back down, and I am wondering where these kids might be going. A mid-tempo (dare I say it? yes, I will…) *groove* kicks in and it still it feels like I am listening to the intro…and now it's slowing back down back into the first riff and I feel like TAFKATA might have wasted a chance for a great start to a crushing record by not taking me anywhere, but then, that all depends on where we are going next. "Shout At the Gates" is a double-bass heavy onslaught that reminds this listener slightly of AT THE GATES, and when TAFKATA finishes off with a butchered version of the "Shout At The Devil" chorus, I get the joke, and apparently it was on me all along. Third song is southern drenched sludge rock—I think PANTERA and I also think I am getting less interested. The doom bits sound stellar, but they never seem to go anywhere, and when TAFKATA speeds things up, the inspiration either flies out the window or is worn so blatantly that it often renders them trite and derivative. They try their hand at punk as well, "Ones And Zeros" (think SKITSYSTEM) with moderate success. I had high hopes for the T-REX cover ("Children Of The Revolution," a brilliant tune), but it falls hopelessly flat. I don't mean to say only bad things about *Worker and Parasite*, because the record sounds better than 90% of what is released these days. When they get it, TAFKATA is fucking spot on, but I think that the record has little or no direction whatsoever, and that they still aren't sure what they are doing. Sadly, a fair piece of what they are trying to do just sounds like commercial Southern bar stoner rock to my ears. (WN)
(Hit the Deck, Kensington PO Box 61222, Calgary, AB, T2N 4Z6 CANADA, www.hithedeckrecords.com)

TAINT – "Disgration Nation" EP

An odd little picture disc EP. The artwork on one side is a spoof of *The Godfather*, the other side a drawing of the band playing. I don't know about this. It ranges from '77 punk to BAD RELIGION-influenced punk. I kinda liked some of the songs, but I was put-off when the song "Sandwich Productions" came on and started spewing the lines "Fuck you you fat-ass bitch, we aint gonna make you rich, no likes you anymore, eat a fuckin' sandwich," and "You need us we don't need you, you fat ass fucking whore." Don't get me wrong, I'm all for the "fuck you" attitude, but the misogynistic feel of those lines really bug me. I won't be listening to this after I'm done reviewing it. (BD)
(self-released, no address)

THE TERMINALS – CD

If you like your punk rock fast and snotty then you could do no better than these guys. From Toronto, THE TERMINALS sounds like a blend of the TOY DOLLS, BLANKS 77, and RESTARTS. The songs are catchy, the vocals pure bile, and the pace is hectic. This is a really fun release and punk as fuck. (AD)
(www.myspace.com/theterminalsrock)

TIMBER – "Beginning" EP

I really enjoyed this one in all its teen-bummer revved-up post-Revolution Summer-by-way-of-basement DIY punk glory. Good stuff. The rumbling lo-fi brilliance of the palatial *MRR* headphones sometimes makes things sound fucked up and supernatural, but then when you listen to it elsewhere it sounds like a totally different record…often either way shittier or way better. This record sounded rad all fucked up and lo-fi (I could imagine it retaining its charms on a multi-gen tape dub) via the *MRR* headphones, but it sounded equally as cool when I got it home and jammed to it or listened to a digital copy. It's well recorded…really enjoyable. Like a mix of THE BRAINWORMS, RITES OF SPRING, and THE INSURGENT. Total east cost *vibeage*. The songs "Beginning" and "Thorn City" are… (P$)
(Something Crucial, c/o Ambrose Nzams, 288 West Deer Park Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20877, www.myspace.com/timbermd)

THE TIME BOMBS – "Nuke Everything" EP

This 7" sounds like a complete rip off of DIRECT CONTROL. Even the subject matter seems to be a straight swipe. The name of their record alone makes me think of the *Nuclear Tomorrow* EP. All you fans of DIRECT CONTROL don't be too impressed, I'm probably giving this record too much credit with such a comparison. I'd say that THE TIMEBOMBS' attempt to jump on this early-'80s throwback wagon is sub-par at best. (PL)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

TRANSIENT – "Symbolic Parasitism" EP

The first thing I noticed about TRANSIENT is the vocals—vicious and brutal—the type that rip you to pieces. What does the band sound like? It's heavy and someplace between metal and hardcore, like DAMAD, LANDMINE MARATHON, and INITIAL STATE. TRANSIENT is from Portland, OR, and the 7" comes with a CD of the tracks. I love it. (MH)
(self-released, c/o Adam Wilson, 2820 SE Ash St, Portland, OR 97214)

TRASH TALK – LP

The brutal new TRASH TALK LP on TTCollective Records follows TRASH TALK's *Walking Disease* from 2007 on Rumble Records and the band's *Plagues* from earlier this year on Malfunction Records. Spencer, Rashod, Lee, and Garrett of TRASH TALK have harnessed a dark and brooding brand of slow and heavy hardcore. These Sacramento punks have an extremely bleak vision of the world. Read "The Hand That Feeds." "Struck down like dogs / You live on hand and knee and wait for nothing / …Kill or be killed…" In the song "Immaculate Infection," TRASH TALK sings: "From cloven hoofs to claws, his rise to power has begun / Among your thieves, there lays another dying mouth to feed / Another filthy beast, your savior lives on wounded knees." Fuck! If you like slower well-crafted metallic hardcore that embraces mankind's certain doom, you must investigate TRASH TALK. (BR)
(TTCollective, www.trashtalkhc.com)

TWO MAN ADVANTAGE – "South of Canada" CD

I love hockey. I love punk rock. TWO MAN ADVANTAGE takes both of my passions and combines them in one melodically obnoxious plastic package. The music is not too bad—fast, slick…a bit punchy, not unlike hockey itself. I imagine from the pictures in the insert and the pace of the album that these guys are fun (enough) to see live (at a bar). They have the melodic "new school" sound going for them that grows *very* old at times. The "69 crew" thing is stupid, and I don't see any hockey hair in their present company, THE HANSON BROTHERS are my pick, hands down, for all things punk *and* hockey. If you ever see the *South of Canada* album cover, I've got a feeling you'll know what you're in for. (RM)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134 www.rodentpopsicle.com)

UNCURBED – "Back From the Ditch" LP

It's now apparent that I was foolish to give up on UNCURBED after *Ackord För Frihet*. Seeing them in New York and Philly when they toured the states left me a bit disappointed. Well, on the second song, "Back From the Ditch," I stopped the record, went and got more beer, and put on *Welcome To Anarcho City* to get myself reacquainted… Back to *Back From the Ditch*. The songs are heavier and thicker with less hooks than say, *Peace, Punk, Love Life* or *Keeps the Banner High* (my personal favorites), leaving one tapping their feet, banging their head, and strumming along more than *kangnaving*. Times are bleak and this guttural bomb blast of a record is a breath of fresh air. My only complaint is that the vocals aren't loud enough. (RR)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

VILE NATION – "No Exit" EP

This is some crazed, fucked up music.

Blistering destructive hardcore that almost never lets up from violent blasting thrash of NEOS and first-record DRI variety, but darker. The riffs are fairly tuneless with no real hooks, but there's an instant damaged weirdness that you can really feel in this record that stops VILE NATION from being just generic thrash. Not much else to say, really, it's a ripper of a record, and definitely worth tracking down. (JU)
(Cowabunga, 195 Armstrong Way #D, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabungarecords.com)

VIVIAN GIRLS – CD

The reissue of VIVIAN GIRLS debut album originally out on Mauled By Tigers. Girl pop with ethereal vocals and fuzzed-out guitars. The music is simple and messy, forgoing melodies for noise. The vocals are pretty and sweet. That musical combination brings to mind some of the girl groups from Simple Machines and K Records. It is unpretentious and nice. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

WARCRY – "The Not So Distant Future" LP

The new record by Portland's WARCRY exemplifies the skill and prowess of musicians who have mastered their art form. The sounds of raw noise and precision playing abound here. Although they sound a bit more subdued than their pinnacle *Deprogram* LP from last year, this offering will still not upset their fans and is in fact a masterpiece in it's own right. There is a certain spark in WARCRY that gnaws at your senses, eating away all the inhibitions and preconceived notions of what punk is, or should be, in this decade. The music plows forward with abandon that so few bands can muster. This is music fit for the times. (WK)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

WAX MUSEUMS – "Magnet Part 11" EP

Three tracks of off-kilter paranoid punk, with a touch of Texan acid-art weirdness. Like THE GERMS mixed with THE FEELERS minus the suicide ethic. If WARKRIME had ditched the hardcore in favor of the Sunset Strip they just might have sounded like this. The kids are just getting weirder. Or is it that the olds are just getting straighter… Who the fuck knows? (SD)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

WE LIVE IN THE TRENCHES – "Autonomy Clinic" EP

Man, Scandinavian punk and hardcore has been dominating the world lately, and for good reason! It seems there's something in that frozen climate that gives all the punks and rock 'n' roll losers an uncanny knack for taking the perfect parts of different genres and make something completely new with it. This band offers something a bit distinctive with their three-song debut, combining a tinge of metal with crude hardcore guitar crunch and throaty vocals that come off sounding like HELL NO mixed with FUCKED UP and MOTÖRHEAD. This definitely has a more contemporary feel than most other bands I've been hearing lately from the region, and I think this would appeal to the hardcore crowd as well as punks. The big stand out for me here is the great lyrics. The title track is one that deals with the disillusionment of the punk scene as it loses significance and becomes packaged conformity. There's also an intelligent take on the structures of sexual power called "Right to Control." The final song has an uplifting and optimistic attitude about the people finally waking up. I don't believe it for a second, at least not in this country. Good to see a little hope, though. Worth checking out if you come across it. (BG)
(Instigate, www.instigaterecords.com)

WHO CALLS SO LOUD – 2x10"

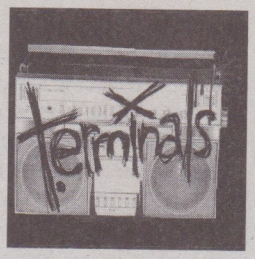
Woah, how did I get all the recycled emo this month? Jeez. I may have attended a More Than Music fest or two but c'mon! I really have no idea what to say about WHO CALLS SO LOUD. It's driving guitar-heavy emo in the style of the mid-to-late '90s, maybe FOUR HUNDRED YEARS?? I honestly don't even remember the touchstone comparison bands for this precise genre of '90s emo. Maybe this record would have come with a Kent McClard tract had it come out in '93 rather than 2008? This band and the other emo band I got for review are both San Francisco based, so I guess, unsurprisingly, there is an SF scene of emo-revivalists I know nothing about. I dunno. I was there first time 'round and saw the kids rocking a-rhythmically, hands clutching backpack straps, Pooh Bear 'n' star tattoos and Basement Children zine swaps. It's not like I am vehemently opposed to emo in '08, it's just really strange hearing bands that are total replicants of shit I saw as a teenager. Punk rock is a museum, I guess. It's just weird when the forgotten sounds of your own youth turn out to be the exhibits. (LG)
(Sorry, PO Box 666, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019)

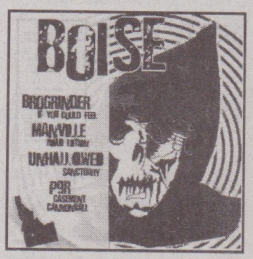
WORMEATERS – "In God We Trust" EP

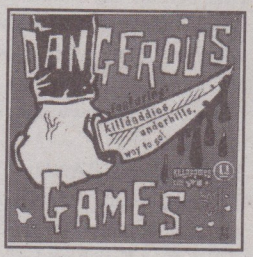
Holy fuck! With WORMEATERS you get five pissed off New Jersey garden state beat downs with ever-so-delicate influences from SHEER TERROR, NEGATIVE APPROACH, and the legendary ANTIDOTE! WORMEATERS represents the highest order of brute strength thug hardcore in the northeastern United States! The lineage from AGNOSTIC FRONT, CRO-MAGS, and WARZONE leads directly to the hardcore of WORMEATERS. This is 100% absolutely rough and ready northeastern USA hardcore! On side A, WORMEATERS, slams into "Preserve The Right" then "Libido Dominadi" and conclude with "Violence Be With You." This music is fucking ferocious! Side B offers "It Takes A Cannibal," "To Survive," and the epic, "Baptized Abortion." This hardcore is so ruthless and unforgiving it will take your breath away! Get this record immediately! (BR)
(Hardware, PO Box 1546, 49006 Osnabruck, GERMANY, www.hardware-records.com)

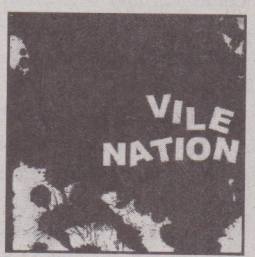
THE WRETCHED ONES – "Rut/Lady Boss Single"

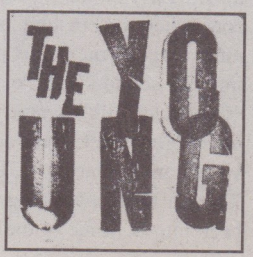
No fucking shit! The almighty WRETCHED ONES is still at it!! This is one of the classic American bands that helped to define what American Oi! was back in the early-mid '90s, along with the likes of THE ANTI-HEROS. Except the WRETCHED ONES were not necessarily about skinheads and Oi!, but more about working hard, playing hard, and drinking harder, which is, of course,











what seems to appeal to all skinheads worldwide for some reason?!?! But before I lose track of this single, let me say that if you are a fan of the band or a die-hard vinyl collector, then you must buy this! Even though both songs are from the recently released full-length CD, this is vintage WRETCHED ONES, which is great and is worth the $4 for this record. Yes, you read that right… Headache Records is keeping it real and holding fast to the old school of photocopied covers and affordable singles!! (MJ)
(Headache, PO Box 204, Midland Park, NJ 07432, www.headacherecords.com)

THE YOUNG – "Out Of My Face" EP

This band is good, *really* good, but unfortunately a lot of the quality is lost on a DIY recording ethic. Lo-fi suits a certain sound—a sound that this band is ten *scillion* miles away from. I'd love for Austin's youngbloods to take this into a big shiny studio with some boring twat behind the twiddling board and give these songs the bigger and shinier production they deserve. Quality deserves quality, so they say. (SD)
(Super Secret, www.supersecretrecords.com)

YOUR PEST BAND – "Your Pest Vinyl" EP

Another kick ass 7" sent to us from the greatest pop punk label on earth, Snuffy Smiles. This is the first I've heard of YOUR PEST BAND. and I'm totally impressed. They play up the whole early-'90s East Bay sound real well. Aside from BLOTTO, I guess CRIMPSHRINE is the easiest to equate them to, but they play a bit faster and more manic then CRIMPSHRINE. I hear a lot of HORRIBLE ODDS and FLESHIES in the music, and ven a bit of TULSA in the guitar playing. But yeah, killer 7", for sure! Five songs in all—the first four totally rage, and then on the fifth track they slow it down a notch with a REPLACEMENTS-style love song. This is everything you could possibly want from a 7". (FS)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku, Kita-Ku Kyoto, 603-8117 JAPAN)

ZOMBIE SURF CAMP – CD

If you're way into THE MISFITS, check out the first song ("What's Eating You"). It's a good MISFITS-inspired jam with cool DANZIG-ish vocals and nice guitar sounds. The reverb isn't overwhelming on that one. The rest of this CD is somewhat uninspired MISFITS-styled surf music. Easy on the reverb! All the 'verb sounds cool when you're playing chords, but for the intros, when you're just playing one string at a time it sounds a little too thick. The song "Culture of Life" is pretty good too. It's a little more blown out, with some cool background vocals and guitar parts. Why not just put out a 7" with those two songs on it? I would have been into it. Some of the rest of this is all right, but some of it borders on bar rock. (P$)
(self-released, zombiesurfcamp@gmail.com)

V/A – "Alaska 7-inch Compilation" EP

FOA! That's "Full On Alaskan," for those in the lower 48 not in the know. This single showcases four bands from the last frontier, and as you may expect, the music is just as close to normal as the state is to New York. Based on the name, you might guess LOS GRAN TORINOS is from Mexico, but they couldn't be closer to the Arctic Circle if they tried. Their sole contribution is upbeat, fast rock music with saxophones screeching, and a barking dog provides the vocals! The dog growls when the music stops. STUBBY'S CRACK COMPANY also only provides one song, uses a sax, rocks, has a strange name, but instead of using a dog for vocals uses a pretty decent dude singing strange silly things like, "I keep it greasy." FATS TUNAMELT might have the strangest name on this thing and offers three short, fast songs—one of 'em with a funk flavored guitar riff and lyrics about masturbating. GFY provides the closest thing to a punk song and it's called "New Metal." It's a simple straightforward sing-along and might be perfect. For some reason it reminds me of the DICKS (just their best-known song) and BAD TIMES (just the vocals). The cover art is a drawing of a snowman being impaled by a guitar. I normally despise record covers with images of guitars being used, but this is so stupid it works. I only hope the snowman is able to pull out the guitar and impale Palin with it instead. (MU)
(Kenai Pen, PO Box 4268, Soldotna, AK 99669, www.kenaipen.com)

V/A – "Boise" EP

Four bands from Idaho, and, essentially Boise, ID, hence the name of the comp. None of the bands sound alike. BROGRINDER does generic power violence/grind with multiple vocalists. MANVILLE is poppier punk with a tiny bit of a street punk sound—catchy. UNHALLOWED has a bass heavy, arty, noisy emo sound. You know those bands where kids feel the need to clap with the song during the breakdown like at some disco party? P-NINER is generic lo-fi screamo. It's all a bit lo-fi and none of the bands really grabbed me. Sorry Boise. (MH)
(208, 2218 N 34th Boise, ID 83701)

V/A – "Dangerous Games" CD

This three-way compilation features a band from Italy (KILL DADDIES), a band from San Diego (UNDERHILLS), and WAY TO GO! from New Hampshire. All three bands play pop punk that is very much inspired by THE QUEERS, SCREECHING WEASEL, and all that stuff. Although the bands are all good, nothing really leaps out at me from this and I can't see myself listening to it again. It's all too formulaic and color-by-the-numbers. (AD)
(Cabana 1, 3231 Business Park Drive, Suite C-309, Vista, CA 92081, www.cabana1records.com)

V/A – "The Right to Assemble vol. 2" LP

There is something amazing about records that highlight local scenes. Overtime they become important pieces of regional history. This holds true especially for punks. Historically, we had *Boston Not LA*, *Flex Your Head*, and later *Turn It Around* or the *Osaka Punk Apocalypse* compilation. All of the above become snapshots of an era, a people, and a sound. This is New Brunswick, NJ. Presented on this slab are over 20 bands/artists: THE DEGENERICS, SEASICK, DEAD TIRED, FANSHEN, ENSIGN, THE ERGS, STARING PROBLEM, and many more. A personal highlight for me is hearing Pedro Angel Serrano open this disc up with a nice piece of dialogue. Very fuckin' cool. (MS)
(Soul Rebel, www.myspace.com/xsoulrebelrecordsx)

V/A – "Solid" EP

Whoa, I was not ready for this shit! I do not mean this in a positive way. A comp featuring MDC, CITIZEN FISH, EMBRACE THE KILL, and MOUTH SEWN SHUT. This record is pretty atrocious. EMBRACE THE KILL delivers a ska punk tune with Dick Lukas and a grind/crust vocalist doing the switch off—it is bad. MDC seems to be going for something reminiscent of their older material, but too many years of bad records make me completely disinterested. This track comes nowhere near the intensity of their old material. "Maryjane for President" starts off with, "Give the land back to the Indians, open up the borders, no more fucking vivisection, and free the marijuana." What!? MOUTH SEWN SHUT's track makes me think of suburban dudes doing that white boy up-and-down hip-hop thing with their hands. The best track on the record is the CITIZEN FISH track. I am by no means a fan of the ska elements, but this song is catchy, light on the ska, and has a pop element, which works. In closing, I can get behind *some* of the messages in the lyrics, but I would have preferred this in print rather than a piece of audio. (MS)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134 www.rodentpopsicle.com)≥

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ADVERSE REACTION / TARGET SOCIETY – From what I gather it's pretty much the same band playing slightly different styles of punk at different points in time, both recorded live. The ADVERSE REACTION stuff is sometimes very sloppy three-chord punk with screaming vocals and sometimes very sloppy hardcore with a dark, kind of goth feel to it and some SABBATH style riffs. TARGET SOCIETY is also very sloppy but heavier punk with lots of metal parts and deep growling vocals. (Pete) (15-song CD, no lyrics included, $4 ppd. 26 N. Georgia Ave, Rear #4, Atlantic City, NJ 08401)

ANTIMOB – They play grinding hardcore that is leaning toward crust. The heavy guitars, with a bit of a metal influence, back up dueling screamers and while most of the songs are fast, there is some good mid-tempo stuff that is reminiscent of FILTH. It's an all round solid demo and I would imagine that their new 7" is worth checking out. (Pete) (7-song cassette, lyrics included. mountzazine@yahoo.com)

BLANKET OF M – This is the second CD-R that the band has sent my way. The songs still have that SoCal pop-punk feel in the vein of BIG DRILL CAR but some of these songs are a bit more rock 'n' roll. The slightly snotty, sung vocals are backed by catchy music that has some pretty nice hooks. This is certainly better than their previous release which was pretty good itself. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included, $3ppd. 11777 Brazos Way, Lindale, TX 75771)

BLANK STARE – Discography tape released for summer '08, featuring their self-titled 12" (Refuse/Third Party), unreleased stuff from the same session as the 12", *Suicide* EP (Refuse), *White* EP (Third Party), and self-titled EP (self released). Never checked this band out till now and have to say I enjoyed the 12" the best; the later (earlier) recordings' production was too slick and sounded like a poor-man's SLAYER after a while. Modern Boston HC with a thick straightedge vibe. Hand numbered and limited to 100. (Vinnie) (13-song cassette, no lyrics included. No address)

LA CARAOCULTA DEL ROCKNROLL – I love lo-fi recordings but this was so low it had me puzzled what was happening. Low like, "put that shitty Radio Shack tape deck on the kitchen table, hit record, and shut the four doors between it and the room we'll play these songs." An ESKOBURTO cover, but honestly, could barely distinguish between songs. I think the songs are sung in Spanish (the song titles are in Spanish) but I honestly couldn't tell if the guy singing sang "el" or "the." With all that in mind…what I heard I enjoyed. Reminded me of SCREECHING WEASEL at their most RAMONES-moments. I'll watch for a slightly better recording! (Vinnie) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included. TPV Records, 627 1/2 SW 12th St., Gainesville, FL, 32601)

COLD SHOULDER – There is no screwing around on these six brutal hardcore songs where even the breakdowns are fast and aggressive. On the whole, it has an early DC hardcore, play-as-fast-as-you-can feel to the songs. There is some cheesy guitar solo stuff that I could have done without and the tape quality isn't great but the songs themselves are generally solid. (Pete) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, landordeath@gmail.com)

CRITIKILL – Damn, if it wasn't for those emo Brazilians (see the "V's") I'd probably give this one "demo of the month." (To note, the ska-intro on track nine really didn't help your cause.) Hailing from Scotland, CRITIKILL has been playing for over ten years. Totally DIY produced CD: full color artwork printed on thick paper, this ain't no laser-printed, binder-paper shit! Reminds me greatly of the last SUBHUMANS (UK) album, STRAWMAN, and LEATHERFACE. So, incredibly melodic with well-written lyrics. Fuck, this thing, titled *Fuel the War!*, is *really* good and *really* recommended. (Vinnie) (10-song CD, lyrics included. critikill.punk@virgin.net)

DAYTIME SOIREE – Seems like a bad inside-joke band and I expected bad-pop punk or bar rock, but it's sloppy HC—MISFITS and MINOR THREAT are covered. Pretty decent demo, but without the lyrics and songs called "You mosh like a fairy" and "Shoot the kids at school" makes me think this probably is indeed just a bad inside-joke band. (Vinnie) (10-song CD, no lyrics included. No address)

ETG BLOOD – I have no idea how much DEATHREAT this band listens to, but it's not too often that I hear a band that immediately makes me think of them (as opposed to the other bands they've played in, who I don't think have as distinguishable of a sound) in terms of the riffs and even how the drums play along, albeit slower and less heavy. There's a sense of determination in the vocals and lyrics, and I think this band shows promise. (Dan) (6-song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 217, Thompson's Station, TN 37179)

EUNUCH – CROSSED OUT and especially MAN IS THE BASTARD are likely the main influences here, and I hear some CAPITALIST CASUALTIES too. Distorted bass drives the slow, simple-but-effective riffs, periodically interrupted by bursts of thrash, with abrasive, spiteful vocals boiling over. A bit too derivative, but still well done and better than a lot of modern bands attempting this style. (Dan) (8-song cassette, lyrics included. 59 Myrtle St, Somerville, MA 02145)

FIRST BASE – This is totally solid melodic, emotional hardcore that sounds way too good to be a demo. It sounds like a mixture of the aggressive style of early-'00s East Coast emo such as NEIL PERRY with the melodic and much wussier emo of the likes of HOT WATER MUSIC with some edger-style guitar chugging and gang backing vocals tacked on. The recording is excellent as well. (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. firstbasehc@gmail.com)

FUN BLOOD – The opening track on this CD sounds like a mid-tempo hardcore take on a BAUHAUS song with a dark post-punk feel brought on by jerky, spacey guitars and deep, monotone vocals. The second track is a good straight up, fast punk rock song with power chords and screaming vocals. Unfortunately, they follow that up with a messy throwaway song that just sounds like bad guitar playing and noise. It may just be the recording and there might be some drums back there somewhere but they can't really be heard. To their credit they tack on a 20 second blast of hardcore at the end. On the whole it's a little bit messy but if you pick out that one song it's a solid demo. (Pete) (4-song CD, no lyrics included. funblood13@gmail.com)

GERM ATTAK – *Live With THRUSH.* is the name of this one, and it's a sampling of the band's material but live with THRUSH. Included are a few covers of the suspects you'd expect (e.g., KAAOS, DISORDER). The band played here recently and immediately after their set they took off to the next show. I was planning to ask them who THRUSH is, but they disappeared in a cloud of bad European accents. From what I can tell, THRUSH adds digital distortion to the songs by some method I don't understand. I believe the distortion is digital due to the way it crackles; it does not sound analog. Sum total: I liked the songs but found THRUSH's addition annoying and would have preferred just the normal Finnish-by-way-of-DISORDER punk the band is known for. (Vinnie) (15-song cassette, lyrics included. myspace.com/black_konflikrecs)

GRIME TIME – Three songs of blown-out garage punk with equal parts pop and snot. The first song has dueling vocals that bring to mind a sleazier ANGRY SAMOANS, and a couple of these throw in some rad surf guitar (complete with whammy bar). Catchy like a virus and will leave you wanting more. (Dan) (3-song CD, no lyrics included. No address)

KIAS FANSURI – As much as I feel that '90s emo hardcore should just be left alone, I can't help but like this. It's three songs in the vein of PORTRAITS OF PAST with full guitars, chaotic drumming and all out screaming giving way to drawn out breakdowns with picked out guitar parts and spoken vocals. The tape quality isn't great and they don't really add anything to the genre but if you like this stuff, these guys do it pretty well. (Pete) (3-song cassette, lyrics included. www.geocities.com/kias.fansuri)

KILL EVERYONE NOW – This is the second demo that I have received from the band. While they have redone some of their previous MINUTEMEN-

style songs, the newer tunes have a darker feel and are a bit slower. The mid-tempo songs combine elements of early California punk (DEAD KENNEDYS, etc.) with the sound of the minimalist early CURE records (recording sound included). While the CD didn't blow me away right off the bat, it has grown on me pretty quickly. (Pete) (12-song CD, lyrics included, $4ppd. PO Box 521174, Salt Lake City, UT 84152)

KINGSHEAD – They play heavy hardcore in an emotional way (not emo). Numerous vocalist scream over a wall of deep guitar sounds and heavy hitting drums. There are plenty of tempo changes as the songs move from chugging, metal influenced mid-tempo parts to fast punk rock. (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. imnotchrist@gmail.com)

LAS CONTRAS – Two-man grind hardcore that's drenched in distortion and reverb, and powerful and vicious enough to hold my attention. I don't listen to a lot of this stuff, but I think it would satisfy fans of the genre and I'd be into seeing this band live. (Dan) (7-song CD, no lyrics included. 109 Towerwood Dr., O'Fallon, MO 63366)

MAIN STREET MILITIA – Some baldies on this one…S-K-I-N-H-E-A-D. Mid-tempo Oi! played and done pretty well, though what stuck out most was the singer's voice. I've heard loads of people say, "yeah, he totally sounds like Cookie Monster," but this guy must be related or something. Had to vacuum out the crumbs out of the player after pulling it out. (Vinnie) (6-song CD, no lyrics included. www.mainstreetmilitia.com)

OOGLE ORPHANAGE – The CD kicks off with a hardcore tune that has hints of early-to-mid-'80s DC hardcore with fuzzy guitars, aggressive drumming and yelled/screaming off key vocals. As the CD progresses there is a pop-punk element that is introduced, but an aggressive screaming pop-punk element not unlike CRIMPSHRINE, that is catchy but still maintains a punch. The playing is a little sloppy but due to the style of music, it does not detract from the songs in any way. (Pete) (8-song CD, lyrics included in a nice booklet, $4ppd. mahkev2000@yahoo.com)

QUAN AND THE CHINESE TAKEOUTS!! – Sounds like Iggy Pop if in between getting his dog washed and a stint in a rehab clinic in Seattle, he asked the MURDER CITY DEVILS to jam on some songs. Pretty good but a little slick, and disappointing in the packaging department (pin is cool, sticker is fine, no cover is a major disappointment…but printing your phone number on your CD is ballsy). (Vinnie (4-song CD, no lyrics included. myspace.com/thechinesetakeouts)

QUIEF QUOTA – I like all forms of music and can typically find the silver lining in almost any song, but the lead on this one could very well be the worst music I've ever heard in my life. It's like white reggae artists, wearing patchouli oil, having fundamental Christian beliefs, and attempting to sound like TELEVISION. Sample lyrics: "We're going to get a little funky/Yeah a little bit drunky/And we're going to get crazy/Love-ly lady…" as sung by Dean WEEN. The rest sounds like a third-rate PAVEMENT or WEEZER, but with occasional horns. Someone kill these guys, please? (Vinnie) (19-song CD, no lyrics included. No address)

REALM OF CHAOS – Self-described "New wave of death crust metal." *Stench of Death* is its title, and has punishing slow parts and mid-tempo fast ones with two singers that alternate: a dude growler and a screechy dudette screamer. Music was good, really good, and the packaging was awesome: cool cover and well-designed lyric sheet. Reminds me of AXEGRINDER and STORMCROW; hand-numbered and limited to 300. (Vinnie) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, damaged@care2.com)

SCREWED UP FLYER – This is the band's second demo. They play early-'80s-style hardcore that is just a touch pop, in the vein of 7 SECONDS. The songs are generally short, simple and fast with power chords and solid drumming backing up partly sung, partly yelled vocals. Youth crew style backing vocals round the whole thing out. It's not the most ingenious song writing but it's done well and the songs are pretty catchy, now they just have to deal with the tin-y quality of the recording. (Pete) (5-song CD, lyrics included. www.screwedupflyer.co.uk)

THE SHANKERS – These guys hail from my wife's town and I've searched that place up and down for records, so I know there's no good music there. But, I was pleasantly surprised by this. Recorded live on a 4-track, it's not your stereotypical punk, not a D-beat in sight, but sounds like a faster early (circa-'50s!) rock music. Female and male vocals, upright bass…if X was obsessed with JERRY LEE LEWIS they may sound like this. *But*…guys, cover? Lyrics? Come on…effort, please! (Vinnie) (6-song CD, no lyrics included. 621 W 4th Ave, Chico, CA 95926)

SHATTERED BADGE – Mean, raw and in-the-red hardcore that alternates between heavy, pulsating thrash and crucial breakdowns, a term I do *not* use lightly but is fitting here. The song structures keep things from getting too formulaic, and some cool walking bass lines in places add an extra element. (Dan) (8-song cassette, lyrics included. No address)

SICK SICK SICK – I think every town has at least one band like this: a few maladjusted friends playing unpretentious fast punk sans hardcore trappings that's been done many times before, and they may never get some cult following outside of their area, but when done for the right reasons, with attitude, and you can tell some effort went into the final product, I can definitely hang. Music reviewers be damned, the meek shall reign on earth. (Dan) (9-song CD, lyrics included. sick_info@yahoo.com)

STANDARD AND POOR – Where to start with this one… Okay, title of the demo is *Stank Thing*. They play mid-tempo, three-chord punk, very similar to U.S. BOMBS. They lack any sense of luster but it's kind of decent. There's a song called "I am a American," which sounds suspiciously patriotic, but I think it's about monster-truck enthusiasts who use too much gas and are perpetuating the war in Iraq and thus endangering American soldiers…lyric sheet would have helped guys…so maybe they're pro-military? They do a cover of "Sex Girls in Uniform" by MAU MAUS. Just a CD-R with a printed label in a blank case. (Vinnie) (8-song CD, no lyrics included, snppunkrock@yahoo.com)

SUBMERGE – French crust…? And decent? What the fucking hell?!? Guitars are down-tuned, the riffs are thick and heavy, the production is dirgy…this is a great fucking demo! Sounds at times like a cross between EXTREME NOISE TERROR and HIS HERO IS GONE but fewer slow parts. Can't find contact information but the demo is called *La Quieted du Profit*. What a surprise! (6-song CD, lyrics included. No address)

SUBTRACT – The first song provokes the same quasi-transcendent "lonely, sleep-deprived bus ride through the Midwest" feeling I get from DIE KREUZEN's "Pain," although slower and more drawn out, and sets the tone for everything after, which brings to mind DINOSAUR JR and to a lesser extent HÜSKER DÜ. The former in part by specific riffs, but mainly in the contrast between brash, raw guitar playing soothing melodies over mellow vocals. The vocals have a deliberate "singing but not singing" quality that sound SONIC YOUTH inspired, though more hardcore towards the end, and fit the music perfectly. I've been listening to this regularly and see it being future mixtape material. (Dan) (4-song CD, lyrics included. No address)

THA HORROR – Bastardized ebonics in the band's name and song titles like "Operation: Cash!!" and "Get That Bitch On Birth Control," make me not even care what this sounds like, but I listened to it anyway. The only thing I remembered after turning it off is the shrieked vocals. (Dan) (6-song CD, no lyrics included. No address)

TRUCKSTOP LOVECHILD – These guys are probably a quartet of hard-living dudes. They sing about getting drunk and speed a lot more than they should, and remind me at times of MOTÖRHEAD and QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE, but I think their true sound is something akin to a modern-day DEAD BOYS. Real rocking, in-your-face, dirgy punk. Good stuff. (Vinnie) (12-song CD, no lyrics included. www.truckstoplovechild.com)

VELHO DE CANCER – Post-punk sounding similar to JAWBOX or DRIVE LIKE JEHU from Brazil. Production is really clean and musicianship is top notch, which is great for this type of stuff. The songs feel very familiar, meaning derivative, but the Portuguese vocals are a nice touch and give it a unique sound. (Also, the singer sounds very similar to David Thomas from PERE UBU, which also adds to the mystique.) I've not listened to anything like this in a while but this is really fucking great. Great packaging and cool inserts…ladies and gents…demo of the month for this horse. (Vinnie) (8-song CD, lyrics included. gerente77@hotmail.com)

THE WARBLINKERS – Finnish four-piece playing mid-tempo punk that reminds me of LEATHERFACE. This is somewhat generic but also pretty well played…do I like this…hmm…I don't know! I'm enjoying the guitar and bass parts, but the vocals are a bit too pretty for me and the drums are too straightforward, making this also sound a bit like RANCID. Maybe when they're drunk they let loose a bit more; there's more drum fills and howling and growling. Send us an intoxicated recording please. (Vinnie) (3-song CD, no lyrics included, band@warblinkers.com)

VA: HA-KO BASTARDS PRESENTS: POWDER KEG – This CD took me by surprise. Cover art is fucking bizarre but the music is kick-ass straightforward straight-edge-sounding HC. A lot of songs by only a few bands, and the bands are spread-out across the comp (vs. songs grouped together), which makes this feel like a mix-CD and more listenable. Bands include: UNISON, JAIBO! FPO, HOME SICK HOME, LET'S GROW, BACKSTAB WARNING, PATH OF DECAY, VASELINE CHILDREN, and, FINAL APPROACH. Full color artwork and cover with band information. (Vinnie) (21-song CD, lyrics included. hakobastards@yahoo.com)

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(JD) Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(KC) Karoline Collins
(DG) Dan Goetz
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

A ROUGH GUIDE TO BICYCLE MAINTENANCE / $1 ppd
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs
A Rough Guide To Bicycle Maintenance is a super handy little reference guide that was compiled for a workshop called "How to Love Your Bike Right" at the Portland Zine Symposium in 2003. Info on finding the right bike shop for your needs (advice, parts, accessories, maintenance), how to set boundaries and not feel intimidated being a woman in a bike shop (regardless of your age/bike experience), good reference books for DIY bike repair, and a common sense reminder about locking up your beloved bike are excellent "bookends" for all the repair info sandwiched into the middle. Great cut and paste layout and fantastic hand drawn examples for fixing a flat, doing a proper tune-up, examining the "beautiful bearing," necessary tools, grease and lube (DO NOT USE WD-40!!!), brake basics, and overhauling an unsealed one-speed hub. *A Rough Guide To Bicycle Maintenance* will be good company on any biking adventure. Highly recommended!!! (KC)
Microcosm Publishing / 222 S Rogers Street / Bloomington, IN 47404
www.microcosmpublishing.com

ARTCORE #25 / £5.00 UK, 6.20 Europe, $7.15 world
11.75 x 8.5 – printed – 40 pgs
Why can't there be more zines like this! *Artcore* is the type of fanzine I would love to find when I'm browsing the music magazines at some random independent bookstore. This effort, which has been around since 1986, contains the components of a perfect hardcore zine: outstandingly researched and written articles, interviews with awesome bands, and lots of record reviews. The layout on this is perfect as hardly a space of paper is wasted and the graphics are carefully arranged. Band interviews this time around include Double Negative, Violent Arrest, and Off With Their Heads. That right there should be enough to make you want to get this, but that's just the beginning! The research-based articles on punk history are seriously impressive. Lance Hahn is mentioned somewhere in the pages here, and it is evident his bar-raising series of punk history articles for *MRR* has served as an inspiration. This issue's pieces include the legendary Nuns from SF and the underrated Ripcord, who kept fast hardcore alive during a serious dull period in punk history. Another article that was way more interesting than I expected was the story of Lookout Records. It's crazy to think that it's been some 20 years since those groundbreaking early 7"s came out. Also featured is an interview with Jeff Nelson that centers on his graphic artwork he did during the early Dischord days. Record reviews are crammed with such small print that I almost had my nose up to the paper while I was reading them. Lastly,

this issue is a bit pricier than usual because it comes with a boss EP from Beef People, a lost Virginia hardcore recording from 1985. Look for the review elsewhere in the issue. Highly Recommended! (BG)
Artcore / 1 Aberdulais Road / Gabalfa / Cardiff / CF14 2PH, United Kingdom
www.fourletterword.org.uk/artcore

DORIS #26 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 20 pgs
Although I'm aware that *Doris* has been going for seventeen years, this was my first real introduction. As it is, I have a soft spot for personal zines as long as they're not too sappy or anecdotal, and I like the personable nature of Cindy's writing that reads like a deep conversation with a new-found friend where you're waxing philosophic and baring yourself to some degree. Some of the writing here takes on a more stream of consciousness bend that touches on an array of political and social topics and draws from quotes and past conversations, but a couple of the more pointed pieces are an illustrated one about coming to terms with her introverted nature amidst more assertive female peers, and one that explains the roots of Social Ecology and its relevance to modern society in a way that's understandable. (DG)
Cindy / PO Box 29 / Athens, OH 45701

EARTH FIRST July-August 2008 / $4.50 US and Canada
11 x 17 – printed – 32 pgs
What I like about the *Earth First* journal is akin to the love I have for my local *Slingshot* newspaper: a relatively international forum, action updates that are suffused with motivating force, solid analysis of all things that negatively affect the planet, and some comedy. I guess the most eye-catching news herein is the pronunciation that Eric McDavid got sentenced to 20 years in prison for talking about "terrorist activity." (Basically he's going to prison for falling in love with an FBI informant.) If you can go to prison for talking about something and not actually doing it, these are dark times indeed. But really, this paper is chock-full of information, and it is even spell-checked. I appreciate the intelligent article about needing a multi-generational movement—it addresses how often people drop out and disappear due to aging and the lack of community support in the decision to have children. There is also some great writing on greenwashing, which if you have ever heard me talk before is my least favorite thing next to the plastic bottle/trash island floating in the Pacific that is bigger than Texas. A++++++++++(JB)
Daily Planet Publishing – Earth First! / PO Box 3023 / Tuscon, AZ 85702

EQUALIZING DISTORT Volume 8, Issue 5 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs
This Canadian magazine is an extension of the hardcore punk radio program by the same name. There is a theme to the zines I was assigned this month. I was instantly whisked to the '90s as I was greeted by photo after photo of dreadlocked band member heads. Sorry fashion police, it's no *Vice*. This issue features interviews with Vapid, whom do not wear the aforementioned hairdo, but are from Canada and somehow appear to be styled as such. Blackjacket and the Suicide Pilots also have some stories to tell the *ExD* readership. The Distort Fest is detailed in case you were not there. The big finish is a spattering of reviews and a small list of shows in case you are in Molson country looking for something to do. (DS)
21 Foundry Ave / Unit 5 / Toronto, ON / M6H 4K7 Canada
equalizingxdistort@ciut.fm

FRANCO'S MAC ATTACK #13 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Wistful philosophies on themes like "slow and steady wins the race." Stories of medical students showing compassion for faux-patients suffering from simulated diseases. The history of Liberia (apparently not a massive island of books—I guess that's Libraria?) Also quotes from famous celebrities like Ben Franklin and the Pope. (CH)
107 Deerborn Dr. / Goldsboro, NC / 27534

GIVE ME BACK #4/ $2 US, $4 world
11 x 8.5 – printed – 56 pgs
This zine is a lot like *MRR* in its content formula—it's got columns, band interviews, lots of ads, and album and zine reviews. It's also got a bunch of my favorite people writing about a bunch of my other favorite people, bands, and issues, so I'm going to say A+ right off the bat. You know, like in baseball and in school, but together. Specifically, it starts off with a really well written column about living in a place with violence and crime problems and the fear that goes along with it. It's exciting to read about the author's personal *effed*-up experiences in New Orleans, because it's a traumatic thing so many punks deal with more and more lately as the economy and the storms get worse. I definitely want to hear more about what we ought to do about it. Then there's another fine column about being a 30+ punk with a Miranda July quote at the end and I appreciate that. Spoonboy interviews Delay in a most spectacular way. Julia Booze and Eggplant interview Olympia's Son Skull and talk about punk parenthood and mention EGYHOP (Emma Goldman Youth and Homeless Outreach) and all kinds of other realness. Several other bands were also interviewed including Acts of Sedition. This is a totally solid magazine and you should probably read it. It's very mature, if you don't mind me saying so. I like that. The back cover artwork by Clint Baechle looks really great too.
(JD)
PO Box 73691/ Washington, DC 20056
givemebackzine@hotmail.com

GOT MYSELF #1 / $4 US, $6 world, trades welcome
8.5 x 11 – copied – 25 pgs
Yeah, $4 US or $6 world seems pretty steep to me too, but at least he's open to trades. Definitely influenced by '80s hardcore rags, *Got Myself* has stuff on '80s HC and the current scene in Charlottesville, Virginia, a Shin Kick tour diary, an interview with Concrete Facelift, some guitar tab (never seen that in a zine before), weird drawings, writings, reviews, and pictures. Not at all bad for a first issue. (NM)
4630 Mill Run Ln / Earlysville, VA 22936

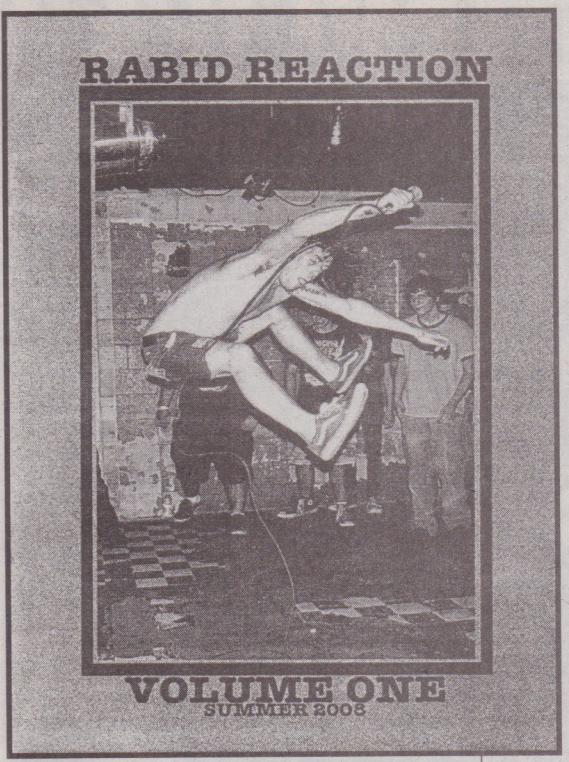
HOW CAN LIMO KID KILL YOUR DREAMS? #3 / $?
5.75 x 8.25 – printed – 96 pgs
I really wish that I were able to read the language of the Czech people. I am interested in a few of their bands, and I love the hairstyles that I have seen. The general aesthetic of this zine is agreeable to my questionable sensibilities and does appear to be about the DIY hardcore scene (and related topics such as veganism) in that geographic region. It looks cool with an odd size and strong layouts, small and portable...contentwise, there is certainly a nod to the *Maximum Rocknroll* style. (DS)
Samuel Records / PO Box 263 / 397 01 Pisek, Czech Republic
www.samuelrecords.net

MISHAP #24 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – printed –36 pgs
This issue of *Mishap* contains a piece that dissects the illusion versus the reality of projects undertaken by activists (volunteering at a food bank versus organizing a protest that mostly just "raises awareness") that I could really relate to. This piece is part two of a contributed story that tells of the aftermath of an illegal police search and seizure performed after a participation in a protest against Nike. There is also a "don't vote" piece that I generally agree with, but this one doesn't really offer any new perspective, a story about the perils of a daylong court-ordered community service before going home to an abusive father, and book and zine reviews. The writing is accessible and articulate, and I'm sympathetic to the subject matter, but the pieces were hit or miss as far as holding my interest. (DG)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405
mishapzine@yahoo.com

NEGATIVE REACTION #11 / £4 paypal
8.25 x 10.75 – copied – 56 pgs
Pretty well done here. I can't give a toss for Oi!, but many of these interviews make great reading. In particular the Oi Polloi talk is real in-depth and stays away from a lot of the typical band stuff. Politics makes an appearance in most every interview, typically along the lines of what's wrong with the working class today, fuck Labour, etc. The 4 Skins get asked if the racist crowd they've "always attracted" will be more discreet at the gigs than in days past. The Sons of Bad Breath and Atilla the Stockbroker interviews are also real good. There's plenty of other writing—rants and reviews, including a number of book and Oi! zine reviews. Many of the rants are fucking funny, and only the barest hint of lad style was discerned by me. Some of the humor is distinct to their locale, like I never was 100% sure what a "charver" is, but I still liked it fine. Not all of this is great, like the Chicken John interview could've been scrapped and some of the humor, uh, isn't funny. Still, this issue is recommended. (JM)
Trev Howarth / 20 New Front St. / T/Lea / Stanley / Co. Durham / DH9 9LY / England
trevhagl@hotmail.com

NIGHT OF THE LOCUST #4 / 1 euro, $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs
Night of the Locust is an interesting little zine out of Ireland that is sort of half music fanzine and half fiction, which is kind of a cool mix if you ask me. Two decent interviews with Galway area punk bands Class Destruction and the Frigits, as well as a few show and record reviews, reveal a more local focus for the music that's covered. But that's only the half of it. There is also a good piece of fiction included—a sort of creepy story about a girl who accompanies a Norman Bates-like character to meet his parents. I usually don't even bother with most fiction stuff I come across in zines, but this one kept me going 'til the end. I also like the short articles on how to beat the car boot, the environmental "Battle of the Yellow Bulldozer at Tara," and the brief rant about why the medical industry would rather not cure diseases (because then who would pay millions of dollars for research and development?). The variety of content makes *Night of the Locust* an enjoyable read the whole way through, and broadens the appeal to those living outside the west coast of Ireland. And it's only a buck, so why not give it a shot? (BG)
Kollin Finnerty / Liam Mellows Rd / Loughrea / Co. Galway, Ireland
neverinamillion@gmail.com

NO THANKS FUCK EVERYTHING #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
I missed the first issue of *No Thanks Fuck Everything* but now I wish I hadn't, this is a quality zine. It reminds me of what *Voices Wake Us* should have been. With *No Thanks Fuck Everything*, Mike is attempting to meld punk with literature and so far, so good. In this ish there are well



done interviews with Chicago punkers Ultratumbados concerning the well being of Pilsen, and España's hardcore destruction unit Invasión. In keeping with the literature thing, there is a rather lengthy and well-informed piece on Leo Tolstoy. That said, I only have one minor complaint; a lot of the pages are missing the first couple letters of text on the edges due to the copying, which often makes it take a bit longer to figure out what you're reading. *Very* minor. Cool zine. (JU)
Mike Friedberg c/o Sarita Gardner / 1000 Grove St. / Evanston, IL 60201
twomonstrousnuclearsteinbecks@gmail.com

RABID REACTION #1 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
A straightforward photo zine out of Oklahoma City with bands like ANS Ceremony, Doomsday Hour, An Albatross, and more. There are some good photos in here—as well as good quality for being photocopied. Most of the pictures are sweaty close-ups of the singer though. More actions shots! (CH)
709 NW 35th / Oklahoma City, OK / 73118

SO IT GOES #2 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16 pgs
This issue of *So It Goes* is a vegan recipe zine, much in the same vein as *Bark and Grass*, *Soy Not Oi!*, etc. Many of the recipes place emphasis on presentation, which is cool, but some of them call for sweet fruits to be used in savory recipes, which I think is gross. Other than that, I can't speak for the quality of the recipes as I didn't have time to test any of them out, but if you are into simple vegan recipes, you will probably find something to like here. (CI)
Jessi Hughey / PO Box 457 / Fort Myers, FL 33902
sickwiththought@yahoo.com

USED VHS / $1
5.5 x 4.5 – copied – 35 pgs
What can I say? I love this style. It's a petite folded paper black and white biographical comic bound with a rubber band. It's feels nice and thick in your hands, and each page has a few handwritten sentences and a simple line drawing to illustrate. The story is about how the author tried to get into boxing at some point and didn't make it quite as far as he intended, but collected some cute anecdotes along the way. This book is a tasty morsel and I recommend it.
(JD)
Raphi Gottesman / 1918 Haste St, lower / Berkeley, CA 94704
Ralphi30@hotmail.com

WARSHIP LOLLIPOP #6 / $1.75
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs
Warship Lollipop is a comic zine hailing from New Orleans. Initially I was intrigued by the cute cover art, but all the interior characters are drawn in a much sloppier style that did not grab me. Random little story lines about art, a shepherd and an angry burning bush, dealing with stress, two Russian slugs trying to make their way to America, the application process to be the next Buddha, "Happy Easter," the "Long Nose of The Law," and two reprinted *POGO* cartoons. While I appreciate the effort that went into the artwork, I just didn't care for this comic at all. (KC)
Kelly & April / 3310 St Claude Avenue / New Orleans, LA 70117
412-973-4220 / 919-751-2667
ktstiles@loyno.edu

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #24 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
Image my surprise when the zine-review zine *Xerography Debt* arrives, featuring...no zine reviews! From now on they only appear online, in part to cut down on the lag time between the zine coming out and the review appearing in print. In their stead are some writers discoursin' on topics relevant to this community. "[People] who have been publishing good, quality zines for years generally have good websites and blogs," a contributor opines. Also included are some submission requests, a piece on zines and art in Turkey (translated from Turkish by a second party), and some work from Jeff Somers. If the zine reviews are online, it's hard for me to see a great need for this forum, which *Xerography Debt*'s editor realizes may be the case. Subsequent issues of this zine may no longer appear in print if demand for such a publication isn't there. (JM)
Davida Gypsy Breier / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212
www.xerographydebt.blogspot.com

WARM SOCKS #? / $2 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
Handwritten per-zine with stories about traveling in Northern California, shows, the Gin Blossoms, Soul Asylum, people, and other stuff. Not my thing but not bad for the style. (NM)
Brandt Schmitz / PO Box 3984/ Berkeley, CA 94703

924 GILMAN

OCTOBER

Friday 3
Paul Baribeau • Good Luck
Fischer • Sourpatch

Saturday 4
"Alejandra's Birthday!"
Endless Demise (LA) • Parasytic (VA)
Until the Fall (SD)

Friday 10
The New Trust • Build Us Airplanes
Cannons and Clouds • Spires
The Americans

Saturday 11 • $8
One Way System (UK) • Poop
Resilience * The Skuds
Flower Violence

Friday 17
Plan 9 (10th Anniversary Show!)
Verse (RI) • Killing the Dream
Morning Glory * TBA

Saturday 18
Oppressed Logic • SMD (Pico Rivera)
Crucial Cause • Migraine • Rat Damage

Friday 24
One In the Chamber • Maggot Colony
Progeria • Godstomper • Verlaten
Thousandswilldie

Saturday 25
"Bucky Sinister's Book Release Party"
Bucky Sinister • UK Kings • Wardogs
Strangers

NOVEMBER

Saturday 1 • $10
Blacklisted (PA) • Ceremony
Have Heart (WA) • Let Down (Philadelphia)
Sabertooth Zombie

Saturday 8 • Doors @ 7:30pm
Corrupted (Japan) • Asunder
Amber Asylum • Stormcrow

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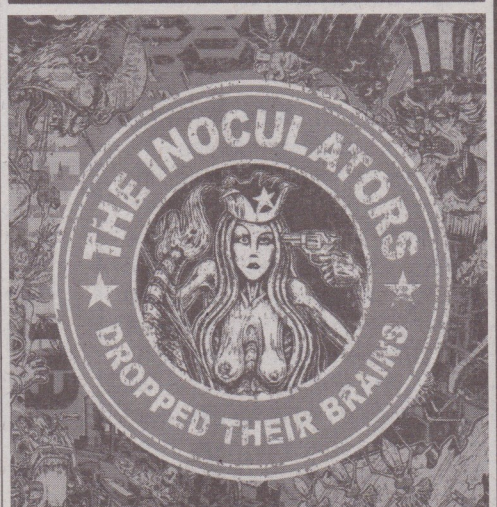

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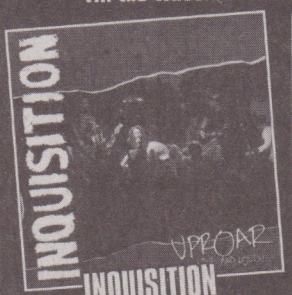

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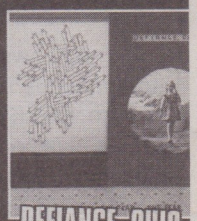

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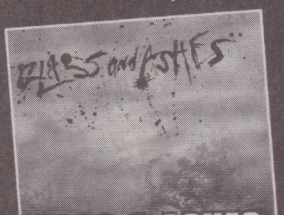
"Great Dep." LP/CD
"Share..." LP

THE TIM VERSION
"Decline of the Southern Gentleman" LP/CD

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS
"We Ride to Fight!"
(The First Four Years)
DOUBLE-LP / CD



GLASS & ASHES
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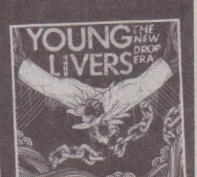

YOUNG LIVERS
"The New Drop Era"
LP/CD

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS
"All Things..." LP/CD

CLASSIFIEDS

ATTENTION CLASSIFIEDS READERS: WHEN RESPONDING TO THESE ADS REMEMBER THAT THE WORLD OF MRR READERS IS NOT A PUNK ROCK UTOPIA WHERE EVERYONE IS LOOKING OUT FOR EVERYONE ELSE AND WE'RE ALL COOL... BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU TELL PEOPLE AND BE CAREFUL WHO YOU SEND MONEY TO. THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE IN PUNKLAND WHO WILL TRY TO RIP YOU OFF, EXPLOIT YOU OR MANIPULATE YOU. REALLY, IT'S TRUE.

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ANY DEMO, practice, video, pictures of Anti and Mood of Defiance. Send to Eric Manor, PMB 314, 10820 Beverly Blvd A5, Whittier, CA 90601.

GUERRILLA VIDEO UPSTARTS! CHRONIC EFFORT is a videozine featuring Tragedy, Signal Lost, Witchhunt, Acts of Sedition, Mika Miko, Kakistocracy, Gouka, stop motion, interviews, art, poetry, and more! Intelligent and edgy as fuck! Now on DVD. Watch the trailer at www.eyesorevideo.com

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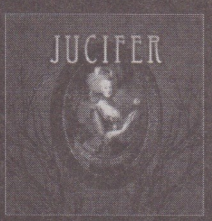

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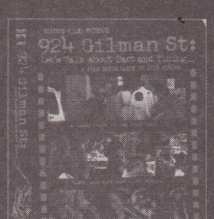
Jello Biafra

Jezebel / Speed Demon 7INCH

What do you get when Jello Biafra and three of the Zen Guerillas attack two songs for a Reverend Horton Heat compilation? You get this aural ass-kicking of a 7-inch! Brand New!



924 Gilman Street

Let's Talk About Tact and Timing DVD

Director Jack Curran's debut feature, 924 Gilman Street, is an ambitious documentary that chronicles the 21-yr history of the volunteer-run, all-ages venue in Berkeley, CA. Bands & peeps appearing include Jello Biafra, Ian MacKaye, Operation Ivy, Screeching Weasel, and many more! All Region Compatible NTSC!

Amebix

No Sanctuary: The Spiderleg Recordings CD digipack / LP+7"

Collects the band's earliest material from "No Sanctuary", "Who's The Enemy," and "Winter", remastered from the original tapes! CD Digipack with booklet, LP with bonus 7

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